NUMBER 106 THIRD QUARTER 1986

The African Communist

JOURNAL OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

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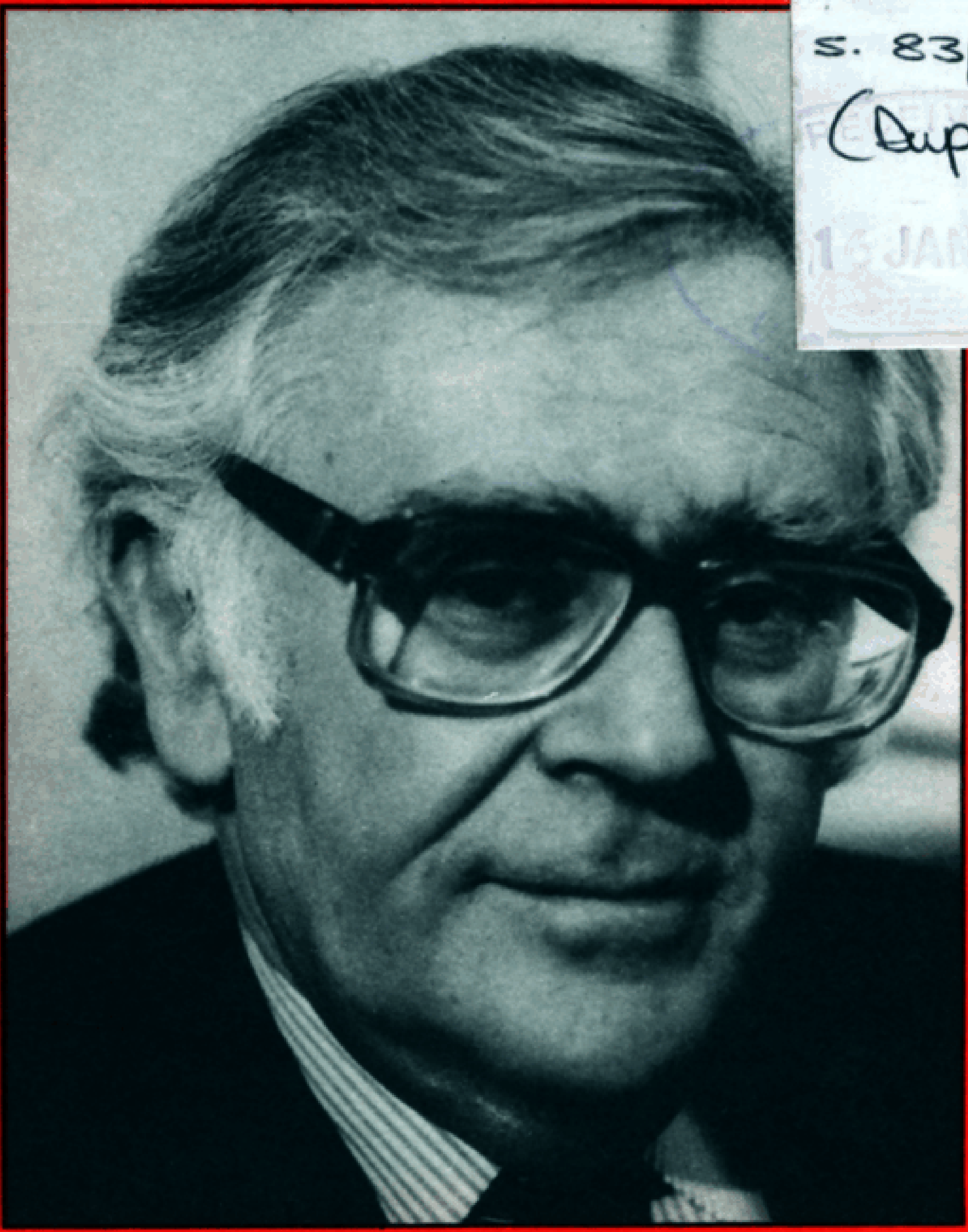

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Distributors of *The African Communist*

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE

AFRICA	*£4.00 per year including postage* *£8.00 airmail per year* (Readers in Nigeria can subscribe by sending 8 Naira to New Horizon Publications, p.o. Box 2165, Mushin Lagos, or to KPS Bookshop, PMB 1023, Afikpo, Imo State)
BRITAIN	*£4.00 per year including postage*
NORTH AMERICA	*$8.00 per year including postage* *$15.00 airmail per year*
ALL OTHER COUNTRIES	*£4.00 per year including postage* *£8.00 airmail per year*

Single copies: £1, $2

INKULULEKO PUBLICATIONS, 39 Goodge Street, London W1P 1FD
ISSN 0001-9976

The African Communist is available on microfilm and microfiche from University Microfilm International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Department P.R., Ann Arbor, Mi. 48106, U.S.A.

Phototypesetting and artwork by Carlinpoint Ltd. (T.U.)
5 Dryden Street, London WC2

Printed by Interdruck Leipzig

THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

Published quarterly in the interest of African solidarity, and as a forum for Marxist-Leninist thought throughout our Continent, by the South African Communist Party.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

65TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

On July 30, 1986, the South African Communist Party — the oldest Communist Party on the African continent — will be celebrating its 65th birthday. The Party was formed at a conference held in Cape Town from July 30 to August 1, 1921, attended by representatives of a number of socialist organisations from various centres in South Africa. The Communist Party of South Africa (as it was then called) adopted a constitution, decided to affiliate to the Third Communist International and issued a manifesto appealing:

> 'to all South African workers, organised and unorganised, white and black, to join in promoting the overthrow of the capitalist system and outlawry of the capitalist class, and the establishment of a Commonwealth of Workers throughout the world.
>
> 'We hold aloft the glistening banner of the World Commune to be, when the class war shall have been for ever stamped out, when mankind shall no longer cower under the bludgeon of the oppressor, when the necessaries of life, the comfort and the culture, the honour and the power, shall be to him who toils and not to him who exploits, when none shall be called master and none servant, but all shall be fellow workers in common'.

The dedicated men and women who attended the birth of the Communist Party of South Africa had launched on the South African scene an organisation which was to bring about a radical transformation in the political thought of the entire sub-continent, which was to make a fundamental contribution to the struggle for national liberation of the oppressed peoples, and which was to advance the cause of socialism nationally and internationally.

On this our 65th anniversary we look back with pride at the contribution our Party has made to the overall struggle for national liberation and against imperialism and war. In 1928, under the slogan of a 'black republic', our Party was the first to demand majority rule in South Africa. The great strike of African miners in 1946, the campaign of Defiance against Unjust Laws in 1952, the squatters' movements, the Congress of the People which adopted the Freedom Charter in 1955, the anti-pass campaigns, the general strikes against racial repression and the white republic, the bus and rent boycotts — in all these heroic struggles the South Africa Communist Party played an important and key role.

When the situation demanded a turn to organised violence in the early 1960s, our Party together with the African National Congress helped to bring into existence the fighting arm of the liberation movement — Umkhonto we Sizwe — which has been striking ever more powerful blows against the enemy. This year, 1986, has been proclaimed by the ANC to be the Year of Umkhonto we Sizwe.

Today the SACP is a vital part of the liberation forces headed by the African National Congress. The alliance aims to unite all sections and classes amongst the oppressed and other truly democratic forces for a revolution to destroy white domination. This revolution, whose main content is the national liberation of the African and other black oppressed groups, must put an end to race discrimination in all its forms, restore the land and wealth of our country to the people and guarantee democracy, freedom and equality of rights and opportunities to all.

The immediate struggle to destroy racist colonialism and to win national freedom is an essential part of the struggle for a future socialist South Africa. In this struggle the key force has always been, and will continue to be, the black working class in alliance with the masses of the landless rural people. It is this class which finds its most staunch champion in our South African Communist Party.

We celebrate our 65th anniversary at a time when the mounting struggle of our people on all fronts is rendering our country ungovernable and opening the way to a revolution which will transfer real power from the white minority to the black majority who are at present disfranchised. The dreams which inspired the founders of our Party in 1921 are about to be realised. The nightmare of our internal colonialism is coming to an end and a new day is dawning.

Red Flag Flying

In all parts of the country today the red flag of the Communist Party is being raised by the masses — at funerals and demonstrations in town and country. Epaulettes and flashes bearing the insignia of the Party, the letters SACP and the hammer and sickle, are proudly displayed by the youth under the very noses of the security police. Many people have been brought before the courts for wearing their hearts on their sleeves. The literature of the SACP and of the international Communist movement is in demand everywhere. Never has interest in the ideology of Marxism-Leninism been so widespread.

The Nationalist regime which usurps power in South Africa has been terrified of the influence of the Communist Party ever since it came into office in 1948. But from the outset it has been unable to engage in open debate with us, just as it has been unable to face the challenge of a free election, with the African majority enfranchised. When the then Minister of Justice, C. R. Swart, introduced his Suppression of Communism Bill in 1950, he blamed the Communist Party, not for opposing capitalism and imperialism, but for starting veld fires and poisoning reservoirs. The Botha regime is equally incapable of responding intelligently to the challenge of the liberation movement. In a speech to Parliament on April 17, 1986, President Botha describes South African freedom fighters as "terrorists" and links them with the IRA, PLO and Gadaffi in an international conspiracy, hatched in Moscow, "to widen the cracks within the Western alliance", "to inflict serious damage upon Western global interests", and in the process "to deprive South Africa of freedom and civilised values".

Coming from the head of a state which deprives the majority of its citizens of freedom and equates civilised values with rule by sjambok, Botha's arguments can be dismissed with contempt. But serious attention must be given to the strategy he is now pursuing, inspired and backed as it is by his imperialist allies.

The Botha regime has recognised that its programme of repression, bans and proscriptions has failed. 36 years after the Communist Party was outlawed it now enjoys more support amongst the people of South Africa than ever. As for the ANC, 26 years after it banning it has now emerged not only as the undisputed vanguard of the liberation movement but as the only force which can bring stability to South Africa and provide the focus for genuine people's government.

Faced with the massive and growing authority and power of the ANC-SACP-SACTU alliance, Botha is resorting to the old imperialist tactic of divide and rule. He says he accepts that not all members of the ANC are Communists, but he alleges, without providing any evidence, that "the majority of the members of the ANC Executive Committee are registered members and senior leaders of the SACP. The SACP in practice controls the ANC's executive departments and clandestine operational and intelligence structures", though he expresses some surprise that "notwithstanding its dominant influence in the ANC, the SACP for practical reasons endeavours to maintain and strengthen the ANC as the 'vanguard in the revolutionary struggle' ".

With the SACP, Botha goes on, he will never have discussions. But he adds:

> "I think it is opportune and the duty of the nationalist members in the ANC to sever their relations with the Marxists. If they come forward and say they want to return to South Africa and take part in constitutional evolutionary processes and they renounce violence they will be welcome".

Botha is offering to release Nelson Mandela (and other political prisoners?), lift the ban on the ANC and allow non-Communist exiles to return to South Africa provided they abandon the armed struggle. And what do they get in return? The offer of a few places on his proposed National Council which will consist of "representatives of my Government, of the Governments of the self-governing areas and leaders of other black communities and interested groups so that we can jointly plan the future of our country". There will be no elections. The Council will be nominated by Botha — and he will have all the guns in his hands.

In other words, Tambo and Mandela will be allowed to sit down with Buthelezi, Phatudi and other assorted thugs and stooges — this is what Botha offers as the culmination of the struggle for national liberation which all ANC members are pursuing, for which brave men, women and children are fighting and dying everywhere in South Africa today. This is his miserable vision of the new "reformed" South Africa with which he is trying to tempt "genuine" nationalists to break their links with the "Communists". This is his alternative to the Freedom Charter.

On our 65th anniversary we can confidently predict that Botha's strategy will fail. The ANC will never consent to such a sell-out. The ANC will never co-operate with Botha in operating the Suppression of Communism Act. For our part we reaffirm, in the words of our 1962 Party Programme *The Road to South African Freedom* that "the Communist Party unreservedly supports and participates in the struggle for national liberation headed by the African National Congress". We have the same immediate aim. We fight in the same trench. In our unity lies our strength. Nothing must be allowed to disturb it.

HOW SAFE IS SOCIALISM?

> **"The modern world is complicated, diverse and dynamic, and shot through with contending tendencies and contradictions. It is a world of the most difficult alternatives, anxieties and hopes. Never before has our home on earth been exposed to such great political and physical stresses. Never before has man exacted so much tribute from nature, and never before has he been so vulnerable to the forces he himself has created".**
>
> **— Mikhail Gorbachov, report to the 27th Congress of the CPSU, February 1986.**

The accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station in the Ukraine last April has been remarkable mostly for the way in which it has been converted by the western media into an exercise in anti-Soviet hate propaganda. Meeting in Paris on May 9, the Nuclear Energy Agency of the western orientated Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development declared:

> "At this point the accident has caused no significant threat to public health in any OECD countries in comparison to other health risks".

You would not get this impression from the western media. From the moment the accident happened the Soviet authorities have been blamed for every conceivable reason — for not providing information in good time to foreign countries; for having kept their own people in the dark; for lying and cover-up; for confusion and inefficiency; for technological backwardness which produced the accident in the first place and mismanagement of the rescue operation which succeeded it. Etc. etc. For the Reagan and Thatchers of this world Chernobyl was a glorious opportunity which they seized with both hands. It was part compensation for the Challenger explosion and the failure of a succession of US rockets. It distracted attention from the Reagan-Thatcher cowboy assault on Libya which had so disgusted world opinion; and by turning elsewhere the spotlight of publicity it enabled the US to continue with its programme of underground nuclear explosions and stifled criticism of US refusal to enter into a nuclear test ban agreement with the Soviet Union which itself had unilaterally abandoned tests since August 1985.

In an editorial on May 9 the London *Guardian* acknowledged smugly: "We've all had our gloat over the huge Soviet propaganda failure". Could anti-Soviet cynicism be carried any further? Yet in some ways the western media were eventually confounded by their own propaganda. Exaggerating the effects of the Chernobyl "disaster", they aroused fears of the consequences in their own populations, with the result that western governments had to reassure their citizens that they were in no danger at all from radio-active fall-out. In time it became clear that the hysteria of the western media was totally unjustified, and that the Soviet government was handling the Chernobyl crisis — and there is no need to underestimate its gravity — with the same care, determination and thoroughness which had brought it victory over the Hitlerites in World War 2.

It is even possible that some good will come out of this accident, in the shape of greater public demand for international co-operation to control nuclear developments and the exploration of outer space and to eliminate once and for all the threat of nuclear war. An immediate ban on all further tests of nuclear weapons, as repeatedly proposed by the Soviet Union, would be a good start.

Taking Stock

As it happens the capacity of the socialist countries to take stock of themselves has recently been demonstrated at a series of congresses of the ruling Communist Parties. In the first four months of this year the ruling Communist parties of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic and Cuba held their congresses. Last year the congresses of the Hungarian and Rumanian Communist Parties took place. All were able to record substantial achievements. All placed before their people plans for development which inspired confidence about the future. In the Soviet Union, for example, real per capita incomes have increased by 160 per cent in the last 25 years while in the same period the value of fixed assets has grown by 700 per cent. Soviet industry has advanced at double the rate of the industrialised capitalist states. In the German Democratic Republic the real income per head of population has doubled since 1970, while during the same period the net monetary income per head (that is excluding the value of free services which are substantial) rose hy 83 per cent. Developments in Cuba are a beacon for the whole of Latin America.

At the same time, many of the congresses reported the development of problems so serious that they warranted special attention. In his speech to the 27th congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union comrade Gorbachov reported that:

> "difficulties began to build up in the economy in the 1970s, with the rate of economic growth declining visibly. As a result, the targets for economic development set in the CPSU Programme, and even the lower targets of the 9th and 10th five-year plans, were not attained. Neither did we manage to carry out fully the social programme charted for this period. A lag ensued in the material base of science and education, health protection, culture, and everyday services".

In Hungary general secretary Janos Kadar told his party congress that while real national income had grown by 6 per cent up to the end of 1984 and the standard of living, housing, transport, health and culture had improved in recent years, nevertheless, honesty required that he state also that:

> "real wages, unfortunately, declined, nor were we capable of fully maintaining the real value of pensions and benefits . . . the living standards of certain social strata have not improved, on the contrary, in some cases have deteriorated".

Comrade Kadar asked, however, that the figures he presented be placed in the general perspective of forty years of Communist achievement in Hungary. "I compare the data to 1938, the last so-called year of peace. Today, national income is more than 6 times that in 1938. Industrial production is more than 14 times and agricultural output twice that of that year. In 1938, 27% of dwellings had electricity, today the figure is 98%". . . and so on. And he concluded:

> "We can justly assert that the struggle and work of our Party, our working class has not been in vain. Only a people that had become free and chosen the way of socialism and that has enjoyed the support of the world's progressive forces has been able to undergo such a major development".

All the Communist Party congresses stressed that the development of their countries depended on two main factors: 1. the external situation and pressures; 2. the level of performance of the Communist Party and people in each country.

Capitalist Recession

1. As part of the world economy, every socialist country is inevitably affected by what happens in the capitalist world. Thus what the capitalist

world calls a "recession", or a cyclical crisis of overproduction, sets back the economies not only of capitalist countries but their trading partners in the socialist world. The collapse in the price of oil, for example, deprived the Soviet Union of a huge portion of its revenue from the sale of oil, of which it is the world's largest producer and exporter. The socialist countries cannot entirely isolate themselves from the consequences of variations in the supply of and demand for goods in the capitalist world.

A second factor is the attempt of the imperialist countries to damage the economies of the socialist countries by direct pressure, sabotage and various measures of destabilisation. The United States, for example, embargoes all trade with Cuba. All the capitalist countries impose restrictions of one kind or another on exports to and trade with the socialist countries, especially in the sphere of what they call "high technology". These cold war policies are of course directly connected with the war plans of the imperialist countries, dependent as they are on the performance of the military-industrial complex. Take away war and the threat of war, and the economies of the profit-seeking capitalist countries would suffer enormously. By contrast, if the need to spend money on defence preparations were eliminated, the economies of the socialist countries, in which the means of production and distribution are owned by the people and private profit has been abolished, would simply surge ahead.

2. However, as comrade Gorbachov pointed out in his address to the 27th Congress of the CPSU:

> "Certainly, the state of affairs was affected, among other things, by certain factors beyond our control. But they were not decisive. The main thing was that we had failed to produce a timely political assessment of the changed economic situation, that we failed to apprehend the acute and urgent need for converting the economy to intensive methods of development, and for the active use of the achievements of scientific and technological progress in the national economy . . . A gap appeared between the needs of society and the attained level of production, between the effective demand and the supply of goods".

Socialism, pointed out comrade Gorbachov — presenting, it must be stressed, the findings of the Central Committee of the CPSU — was not just a matter of producing goods, but of developing a new life style.

> "The policy of acceleration is not confined to changes in the economic field. It envisages an active social policy,a consistent emphasis on the principle of socialist justice. The strategy of acceleration presupposes an improvement of social relations, a renovation of the forms and methods of work of political and ideological institutions, a deepening of socialist democracy, and resolute overcoming of inertness, stagnation and conservatism — of everything that is holding back social progress".

The CPSU had learnt certain lessons from its failure to achieve its economic and social targets in the recent period. The first of these lessons, said comrade Gorbachov, was "the lesson of truth". The Party had to acknowledge its mistakes and remedy them openly before the people.

The second lesson "concerns the sense of purpose and resolve in practical action. The switchover to an intensive development of such an enormous economy as ours is no simple matter and calls for considerable effort, time, and the loftiest sense of responsibility". The Party must pull its socks up.

The third lesson — and the main one — was that the success of any undertaking depended on "how actively and consciously the masses take part in it. To convince broad sections of the working people that the chosen path is correct, to interest them *morally* and materially, and to restructure the psychology of the cadres — these are the crucial conditions for the acceleration of our growth."

The Soviet Union was not looking at this matter selfishly, considering only the needs of its own people. An improved performance by the Soviet economy would contribute also to the consolidation of world socialism, to co-operation with fraternal countries, to the strengthening of ties with the peoples of developing countries, and to the maintenance of world peace. In a world in which the military-industrial machine of the United States remains "the locomotive of militarism", the better the performance of the Soviet economy, the more secure the foundations of peace. And comrade Gorbachov devoted a whole section of his report to the Soviet peace programme, stressing that "the struggle against the nuclear threat, against the arms race, for the preservation and strengthening of universal peace remains the fundamental direction of the Party's activities in the international arena".

Criticism and Self-criticism

The importance of the Communist Party congresses in all the socialist countries is that it is the work of the Communists that constitutes the main vehicle of social change and development. Marx and Engels wrote in *The Communist Manifesto* that "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles". It was the conflict between classes that drove society forward. The bourgeoisie, historically, had played a revolutionary role in developing the productive forces and putting an end to feudalism. But bourgeois capitalism had, in its turn, become a fetter on social development and the time had come for the proletariat, the "immense majority" of the population, to overthrow the rule of the bourgeois minority and, by establishing social ownership of the means of production and distribution, put an end to the pursuit of private profit, class distinction and class struggle, opening the road to further all-round development.

Marxist dialectics nevertheless teach us that no society can move forward without the development of contradictions which threaten further progress. In a socialist society, where there are no contending classes, it is the function of the Communist Party to identify these contradictions and, by the ruthless exercise of the weapon of "criticism and self-criticism", mobilise the necessary social forces for the removal of all barriers to progress. Tendencies to inertia, bureaucracy and corruption have manifested themselves in many of the socialist countries, in some cases to such an extent that the threat has been revealed of the alienation of the individual from society.

The Communist Party congresses which have taken place in the recent period have shown that our comrades are facing up to this challenge — and not for the first time. It was the 20th Congress of the CPSU which exposed the damage which had been caused by the cult of the individual and other violations of Communist morality. Now again the Communist Parties have performed their revolutionary function, openly exposed their shortcomings, charted the way forward.

It would be wrong, however, to concentrate all attention, as the bourgeois media have done, only on certain negative features of socialist development which were identified at these Communist Party congresses. As comrade Gorbachov pointed out, Soviet society has gone a long way in its development since the previous Party programme was adopted in 1961.

"We have built the whole country anew, have made tremendous headway in the economic, cultural and social fields, and have raised generations of builders of the new society. We have blazed the trial into outer space for humanity. We have secured military strategic parity and have thereby substantially restricted imperialism's aggressive plans and capabilities to start a nuclear war. The positions of our Motherland and of world socialism in the international arena have grown considerably stronger. The path travelled by the country in its economic, social and cultural achievements convincingly confirms the vitality of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, and socialism's tremendous potential as embodied in the progress of Soviet society. We can be justly proud of everything that has been achieved in these years of intensive work and struggle".

And he concluded with a poetic passage which will linger long in the memory of all the delegates who attended the historic 27th Congress of the CPSU:

"The surging tide of history is now speeding towards the shallows that divide the second and third millenia. What lies ahead, beyond the shallows? Let us not prophesy. We do know, however, that the plans we are putting forward today are daring, and that our daily affairs are permeated with the spirit of socialist ethics and justice. In this troubled age the aim of our social and, I would add, vital strategy consists in that people should cherish our planet, the skies above, and outer space, exploring it as the pioneers of a *peaceful* civilisation, ridding life of nuclear nightmares and completely releasing all the finest qualities of Man, that unique inhabitant of the Universe, for constructive efforts only".

THE ANTONOV CASE – BULGARIA VINDICATED

On May 13, 1981, two shots rang out from the crowd that had gathered in St Peter's Square, Rome, to obtain the blessing of Pope John Paul II. The Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church was gravely wounded. The would-be assassin was captured on the spot: Mehmet Ali Agca, a Turkish terrorist with close links to the Turkish fascist organisation the Grey Wolves. Agca was already wanted by Interpol for the murder of Turkish newspaper editor Abdi Ipekci. After a brief court trial, Agca was found guilty in July 1981 of the attempt on the Pope's life. Sentencing him to life imprisonment, the judge found that he had been acting on his own, as he had claimed in his statements to the court.

The matter might well have ended there had not western intelligence agencies attempted to use Agca to build up a case against Bulgaria and the Soviet Union to the discredit of the whole socialist world. What was in the mind of the prosecution was that since the Pope was Polish, and since the Pope's political activities were directed not only against the regime in Poland but against the international Communnist movement and communism in general, evidence must be sought to show that Agca was acting as an instrument of Moscow in his bid to 'eliminate' the Pope. The improbability of Communists working together with Turkish fascists in the execution of this dastardly conspiracy was not considered a handicap by the imperialists who master-minded this plot against Bulgaria.

In November 1981, Agca complained in a letter to his brother:

> "Ever since May 13, when I was arrested, and until now I have been in fear for my life. I am beaten up and humiliated ... Whenever I ask for clothes or money I am told that I'll get nothing until I begin to confess ...until I begin to lie".

It was precisely in that month that the investigation began under Judge Ilario Martella which culminated in the charges which were eventually presented against the Bulgarian Antonov and others. Agca was submitted for questioning from December 1, 1981, and made several statements, many of which contradicted one another. But it was only in May 1982 that Agca started to implicate the Bulgarian secret services in his activities, and only in October 1982 that he implicated Antonov.As a result a warrant for Antonov was issued on November 24, 1982,and he was arrested the following day.

To recap, the attempt on the Pope's life was made on May 13, 1981. A report dated May 19, 1981, was prepared by a group within SISMI (Italian military secret services) claiming that the order to assassinate the Pope had been issued by Marshal Ustinov, Defence Minister of the USSR. The report later turned out to be a fabrication. Nevertheless officials of SISMI and SISDE (another branch of the Italian secret services) visited Agca in prison on December 29, 1981 and there can be little doubt they were pushing the Bulgarian connection, which had been aired by Italian Under-Secretary for Security, Francesco Mazzola, in an interview on the Thames Television programme "TV Eye" on September 13, 1981 — six months before Agca himself brought the Bulgarians into his story.

From September 1981 there was a massive cammpaign in the western media accusing the Bulgarian secret services and, by implication, the Soviet Union of master-minding the attempt to kill the Pope. One may mention that for good measure Agca also claimed that the Bulgarians contemplated the assassination of Polish trade unionist Lech Walesa, Tunisian President Bourguiba and Malta President Dom Mintoff, though these claims were later struck out of the record.

Antonov was an employee of the Rome bureau of the Bulgarian Balkan Airline. He was brought to trial, together with two other Bulgarians Todor Aivazov and Jelio Vassilev and three Turks on a charge of conspiring together with Agca to assassinate the Pope. The trial, which began in May, 1985, had been preceded by a lengthy preliminary examination under Judge Martella who came to the conclusion that there was a prima facie case to answer

On March 29 all the accused were acquitted on grounds of "lack of sufficient evidence". In fact, the only evidence against the Bulgarians was that of Agca himself, and he proved in court that he was a totally unreliable witness. In his opening address he announced that he was Jesus Christ, a claim for which he was also unable to produce supporting evidence and which must have been greatly embarrassing for his sponsors.

No Confirmation

Agca claimed he conspired with Antonov and the other Bulgarians to kill the Pope. But from beginning to end of the trial, no witness and no material fact supported his claim. In fact, Antonov and Agca met for the first time as prisoners. True, Agca was in Bulgaria in July and August 1980 at the same time as Aivazov — but he was carrying false papers and there was no evidence as to what he was doing there, or that he had met Aivazov. After fleeing Turkey (remember, he was wanted on a murder charge), Agca also spent time in West Germany and Switzerland, but there is no evidence as to what he was doing there either, and nobody has yet suggested the West German or Swiss authorities were implicated in the attempt to kill the Pope.

Questioned in prison in Rome during the preliminary examination, Agca described the appearance of the Bulgarians with whom he claimed to have conspired to kill the Pope. But his descriptions were inaccurate. He later identified the three Bulgarians from an album of photographs shown him by the investigating authorities, but the album itself is suspect. For one thing, it contained photographs only of Bulgarians.

Agca claimed to have visited Antonov's apartment in Rome and to have met Antonov's wife there. But he withdew this claim when it was shown that Antonov's wife was out of Rome at the time he claimed to have met her. Nevertheless, he described the layout of Antonov's flat. Asked how he knew the layout if he had not been there, he said he had read it in press reports available to him in prison. But the press reports were published only *after* Agca had described the layout in his evidence to the preliminary investigation. Clearly, somebody must have coached him.

The only other piece of evidence, if one can call it that, is that a truck was stationed outside the Bulgarian Embassy at the time of the assassination attempt. Agca claimed he was intended to make his escape from Rome in that truck. However, the truck remained outside the embassy for two days — it should surely have been removed the moment Agca was arrested. Furthermore, Agca described other escape plans which did not involve the use of a truck.

Agca also claimed that a person photographed by an American, Lowell Newton, fleeing from St Peter's Square on the day of the assassination attempt was Aivazov, but later withdrew this claim and said it was in fact a Turk Celik who had been with Agca on the day of the attempted assassination.

And so lie followed lie. Yet on the basis of Agca's lies and fabrications, the so-called "Bulgarian connection" was planted in the public mind. Antonov — who, one would have thought, would have made good his escape from Italy before the assassination attempt took place — remained working in Rome unitl his arrest six months later. Aivazov and Vassilev were back home in Bulgaria, but were examined on commission by the Italian judge in Sofia — without significant result.

Not Guilty

On March 29 the court came to the conclusion that the accused — the three Bulgarians and the three Turks as well — were not guilty of attempting to murder the Pope. Yet even at the end, the judge refused to pronounce them innocent, bringing in a verdict that they were "not guilty through lack of sufficient evidence" — leaving the implication that in the opinion of the court the Bulgarian connection existed but could not be proved beyond reasonable doubt.

This formula had been suggested by the prosecutor himself, who had admitted the evidence against the accused was so thin that he was unable to ask for a guilty verdict. Antonov was set free after over three years in prison and under house arrest. His health was broken. He was not a political figure, nor were the other two Bulgarians. All three were the victims of a western-inspired plot to damage Bulgaria and the socialist world in general and provide fuel for stoking up the cold war.

A commission appointed by the International Association of Democratic Lawyers to examine the evidence in the Antonov case concluded their report on the preliminary examination in May 1985:

> "The implications of the Antonov case do not end with the jeopardising of one person's rights to a presumption of innocence. A whole nation has already been put on trial. What if Antonov is innocent? What if the 'Bulgarian connection' is indeed the product of fertile imaginations? The damage will already have been done — not only to Antonov but to Bulgaria, the socialistt states and ultimately to detente and the cause of peace".

The commission drew attention to the fact that the Italian security officials who drew up the first report alleging a 'Bulgarian connection' maintained close contact with US Secretary of State General Alexander Haig and Michael Ledeen, a journalist who was at one time adviser to Haig. "Both Haig and Ledeen promote the thesis that the USSR plays a major role in fostering international terrorism".

The commission also pointed out that certain journalists actively publicised and promoted the theory of a 'Bulgarian connection', namely Claire Sterling, Paul Henze (both of whom wrote books about it), Michael

Ledeen, Arnaud de Borchgrave and Marvin Kelb. It is perhaps no coincidence that Sterling, Leeden and de Borchgrave were all witnesses before the US Senate Sub-Committee on Security and Terrorism which sat during May and July 1981. Other evidence was given to this Sub-Committee by renegades fròm the ANC and SWAPO, and the report of the Sub-Committee, which was headed by one Senator Denton, has been used by professional anti-Communists the world over ever since it was published in Washington in 1982. Amongst politicians who have made statements supporting the theory of a 'Bulgarian connection' are the Italian Ministers of Defence, the Interior and Justice, Dr Henry Kissinger, Dr Zbigniew Brzezinski and Senator Alfonso d'Amato. Amongst politicians who have relied on the Denton report to justify attacks on the liberation movement are the entire South African Cabinet.

The report of the Democratic Lawyers' Commission comments:

> "In the context of the reporting of terrorist-type crimes, the consequencces of irresponsibility are very serious for human rights. In people's minds, the difference between terrorism and legitimate struggles of national liberation and self-determination become clouded. In society, a climate which encourages repressive legislation and state institutionalised violence is fostered".

The Antonov case is not the only example of an orchestrated campaign of disinformation directed against Bulgaria. Other instances are the alleged "poisoned umbrella" murder of a Bulgarian defector in London, the alleged involvement of Bulgaria in drug trafficking, the alleged campaign of the Bulgarian authorities to force Bulgarian Turks to change their names etc. Never is hard evidence presented to the public. Always there are only rumours, nods and winks, and the suggestion that where there is smoke there must be a fire.

The Antonov case has demonstrated that all the smoke has been generated by the anti-communist fire burning in the belly of the western security agencies, who are ready to sink to any level in defene of the interests of their capitalist masters.

CORRECTION

In the last issue of *The African Communist* the date of David Rabkin's death was incorrectly given as October 11. The actual date was November 22.

A MAN OF OUR TIME

Joe Slovo Elected Chairman of the SACP

by Toussaint

The South African Communist Party has announced that Joe Slovo has been elected as national Chairman. Such announcements are rare events in South African Communist Party history. The 'grand old man' of South African labour politics, W.H. 'Bill' Andrews, held the office from 1939 till his retirement in 1949. There followed a temporary appointment in the hiatus until the Party was formally dissolved in 1950.

After its reconstruction in 1953, J.B. Marks was elected chairman. He held the post until his death in 1972, to be succeeded by Dr. Yusuf M. Dadoo, who held the post until he died in 1983.

In some organisations, the position of Chairman is honorific, bestowed on worthies who have served their time and are thus 'ennobled' to the diplomatic arena, to host public occasions and shake hands. Not so in the SACP.

Traditionally in the Party, the Chairman has been the premier diplomatic and public presence, while the General Secretary has been the principal political and administrative figure. Despite the public apparent separation of functions, the chairman nevertheless shares the responsibilities of political leadership and the formulation of policy; his functions are far more political than decorative.

Symbolically, therefore, the past Chairmen of the party have reflected closely the changing and developing orientation of Party policy. Bill Andrews was the unifier and reorganiser of the Party after a period of internal strife and organisational confusion; he was, above all, an elder statesman from the trade union arena, steeped in the traditions of majority decisions, of rules of orderly decision-making, and of fraternal unity in struggle. His period of office was characterised by the need for precisely those qualities. It was the period of rediscovery of a united and active party, of orderly debate, and of disciplined acceptance by all its members of majority decisions and of centralised leadership. It was above all a period of legitimacy. The Party was legal — if sometimes harassed by the law — and lived politically in the open, without clandestine operations or membership. Symbolically, Andrews' tenure of office ended as that period of history itself ended, with the Suppression of Communism Act, and a party driven into outlawry.

J.B. Marks headed the organisation in some of its most difficult years — the years in which an entire organisation had to be rebuilt anew out of the confusion and dispersal of ranks after the Suppression of Communism Act, preceded by the dissolution of the Party by decision of the Central Committee. Marks was the symbol of those Communist veterans who refused to accept that — Suppression Act or no Suppression Act — South Africa could go forward without an independent Communist Party. But he also represented the veterans of the ANC and the national liberation movement who had built a powerful presence through decades of determined struggle. His chairmanship spanned the period of Party reorganisation, in total secrecy; later in its first illegal public activities and appearances. It was the period in which the Communists broke out of isolation, and forged the close bonds of unity with the national liberation movement and the ANC which still remain as his finest legacy.

Dadoo represented a totally different generation of young, nationalistically-oriented Communist militants — which he largely fathered through his own selfless and passionate involvement in mass struggles of the Indian people of South Africa. Dadoo's period of office marked the Communist Party's steadily strengthening alliance with the national liberation struggles of the black majority, and its total acceptance of the national movement's leading role as the voice and mass organiser of the revolutionary capacity of the people. It was a period of mass struggle, of bold and militant confrontation with the white state and its institutions. Yet in its earlier years it was still a period concentrating mainly on non-violent forms of struggle — legal or extra-legal.

Non-violence and passive resistance struggles had been pioneered in South Africa by Gandhi. From that tradition Dadoo departed considerably, taking from it what he found valuable and appropriate to his times, and making mass resistance and disciplined mass struggle the central creed of the Party — and through the Party's influence, the central strategy of the whole national liberation movement.

Marks and Dadoo steered the Party from the epoch of non-violent underground struggle into an altogether new epoch. Sabotage and quasi-military forms of action were being developed and deployed. Both men accepted totally the rationale of the new tactics and forms of struggle; both adapted their traditions to the new necessities of political struggle, in which military and quasi-military forms combine with the mass, unarmed struggles of the people. Both their names remain forever linked in the minds of the people with those great Congress-led upsurges in which the foundations of today's achievements were laid down.

From Non-violence to Armed Struggle

Their successor, Joe Slovo, also bridges the two eras of history which characterised the Communist Party's attitude to violent struggle and military-style action. Joe joined the Party in the days when its tactics — like those of the national liberation movement — were exclusively non-violent, although often knowingly illegal. He remained in the leading ranks of the Party during the period of its illegal underground reconstruction after 1950; he participated in the reappraisal and re-education which led to the decision to incorporate violent and military-style actions in the Party's tactics; and he became a leader in the transition of the whole movement to these new forms of struggle, and in the on-the-ground actions which were thereafter launched against the apartheid state. In a strange way, Joe's own personal metamorphosis — from full-time lawyer in all the traditional formalism and legalism of the courts, to full-time revolutionary politician outside the law in quasi-military confrontation with the state and its law — that metamorphosis mirrors almost exactly the process of growth and change in the Party and the whole of the South African liberation struggle in that period.[1]

Joe Slovo is now 60 years of age. He was born in Lithuania — now part of the USSR — and came to South Africa with his parents when he was 9 years old. He has only the most fragmentary memories of his birthplace; his entire consciousness has been fashioned in South Africa, at school, university and in his chosen profession. He is not a 'naturalised' South African, since 'naturalisation', applied for when he became an adult, was rejected on political grounds by the South African government.He is in every respect a South African — a 'natural' South African, devoted to its people and their future, steeped in its culture and its politics.

He entered politics as a youth of 16. He was working as a warehouse assistant in a chemical wholesaler's establishment in Johannesburg when a strike over wages and conditions was called by the National Union of Distributive Workers, of which he was a member and a shop steward. It was here that he learnt the strength of solidarity and unity in action; and here too that he began to understand that an all-white union must ally itself with the black workers, take on board their needs and aspirations, if it is to get anywhere. Without the black majority, he learned from experience, no real changes could be wrung from the establishment of white South Africa. Those educational experiences led him to membership of the Communist Party.

It was war time. The Party devoted itself to the defeat of fascism on a world and South African scale — combining the struggle against the Hitler-Mussolini axis with the struggle against its ideological bedfellow, white supremacism in the South African state and society. Slovo joined the South African army, saw service in Italy with the 6th Armoured Division, and was demobilised after the war's end, still without any trade or occupational qualifications. He had seen something of the heroic anti-fascist struggle of the Italian partisans inspired by an underground Communist Party. The significance of that struggle made a deep impression on his political understanding.

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[1] It will be noted that with the exception of Marks, all the chairmen referred to come from South Africa's minority racial groups. This is not however a reflection of the party reality. Most secretaries of the party have been African — Albert Nzula, 1928 to 1929; Moses Kotane, 1938 to 1978; and Moses Mabhida, 1978 to 1986.

After the war, still only 20 years old, Slovo was enabled by a demobilisation grant to enrol at Witwatersrand University to study law. He revealed a genuine aptitude for the law, and received his BA-LlB in 1950 and with it the Prize for the best student of the year.

During his student years he was active in both student and general political activities, as a member of the Young Communist League and later of the party. During this time he came to know another YCL and Party member, Ruth First, whom he subsequently married in 1949. Joe was a member of the Johannesburg District Committee of the Party at the time of the passing of the Suppression of Communism Act in 1950. When the Party's Central Committee decided to dissolve the Party, Joe was one of those who set about the task of reconstruction. He believed firmly that the South African freedom struggles could not succeed without the presence of the Party, with its uniquely high standards of activity and discipline, and its advanced theoretical understanding of society and politics. He immediately got down to the job of reconstituting a Communist organisation together with those of his former colleagues who felt about matters the way he did. He became a foundation member of the new, reconstituted SACP which took over the tasks and the banners of the former CPSA.

Parallel to his activities in the now underground Communist Party, Joe began life as a barrister. His apprenticeship and training for it had taken place when the Party was legal and its actions fully open to the public gaze. He had to make the transition to illegal politics and the underground within his quite opposite transition to legal practice as a so-called 'officer of the court'. Increasingly, his legal work came to be in political cases; the need for defence lawyers to counter rising persecution of activists by the state became constantly more acute. He attracted a considerable reputation for his able and aggressive defence of political activists, and through his appearance in his own defence in the Treason Trial of 1956, when he and Ruth were both amongst the accused. His status as 'officer of the court' did not, however, prevent him from being detained without trial for five months in 1960, after the Sharpeville massacre.

A Time To Choose

Yet even as his legal standing and prestige expanded, it became obvious that the balance in South Africa was shifting steadily; the old era of legal parties and legal politics conducted in the open was ending. In 1960 the ANC had also joined the Party in underground illegality; underground extra-legal activity was becoming the main — almost the only possible — form of resistance to the white supremacists. Joe had no doubt where his allegiance lay. His first loyalty lay not with established order and the law, but with the national people's resistance and the underground. When the ANC and the Party, in 1961, began the first steps towards sabotage and quasi-guerilla style attacks on the white state, Joe was amongst those from the two organisations who founded Umkhonto we Sizwe as an armed resistance and revolutionary force for the liberation movement. Almost symbolically, his last significant legal task as barrister was as aide to Nelson Mandela during Mandela's 1962 trial for leaving South Africa on an Umkhonto mission. In 1963, he was sent abroad by the party to continue his work for the development of armed struggle against the South African regime in collaboration with the ANC, and has been living and working outside South Africa since that time, in Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania and elsewhere. He was in Umkhonto's leading echelon from its formation, and has remained there ever since, perhaps its foremost theoretician on matters of military-political tactics and strategy.

Practice both in student politics and in court has made Joe into an impressive and fluent public speaker and advocate for the South African liberation cause. Without demagogy, his speeches draw on a deep stock of Marxist understanding and an ability to use it for original and illuminating analysis. He has, in recent years, become acknowledged as the party leader who makes many of the important keynote speeches of the organisation. So too with his writings. Writing does not come naturally or easily to him, and he has written comparatively little in a movement which many see as top-heavy with writers. But he has certainly become the movement's foremost writer on themes of military-political strategy,and the draftsman of many crucial theses which have shaped the present strategy and tactics of the whole South African revolution. Perhaps the most widely known and read is his essay on 'South Africa — No Middle Road', published in 1976.[2]

Slovo's writings and speeches on this theme of revolution have not only served the Communist Party, but — more importantly — have helped to shape the attitudes and thinking of a whole generation of non-Communist freedom fighters, members of Umkhonto and township revolutionaries in South Africa, who today are making and reshaping the whole future of our country. His writings have provided much of the ideological cement for the remarkable liberation movement-communist alliance which is the central and distinguishing feature of the present South African confrontation.

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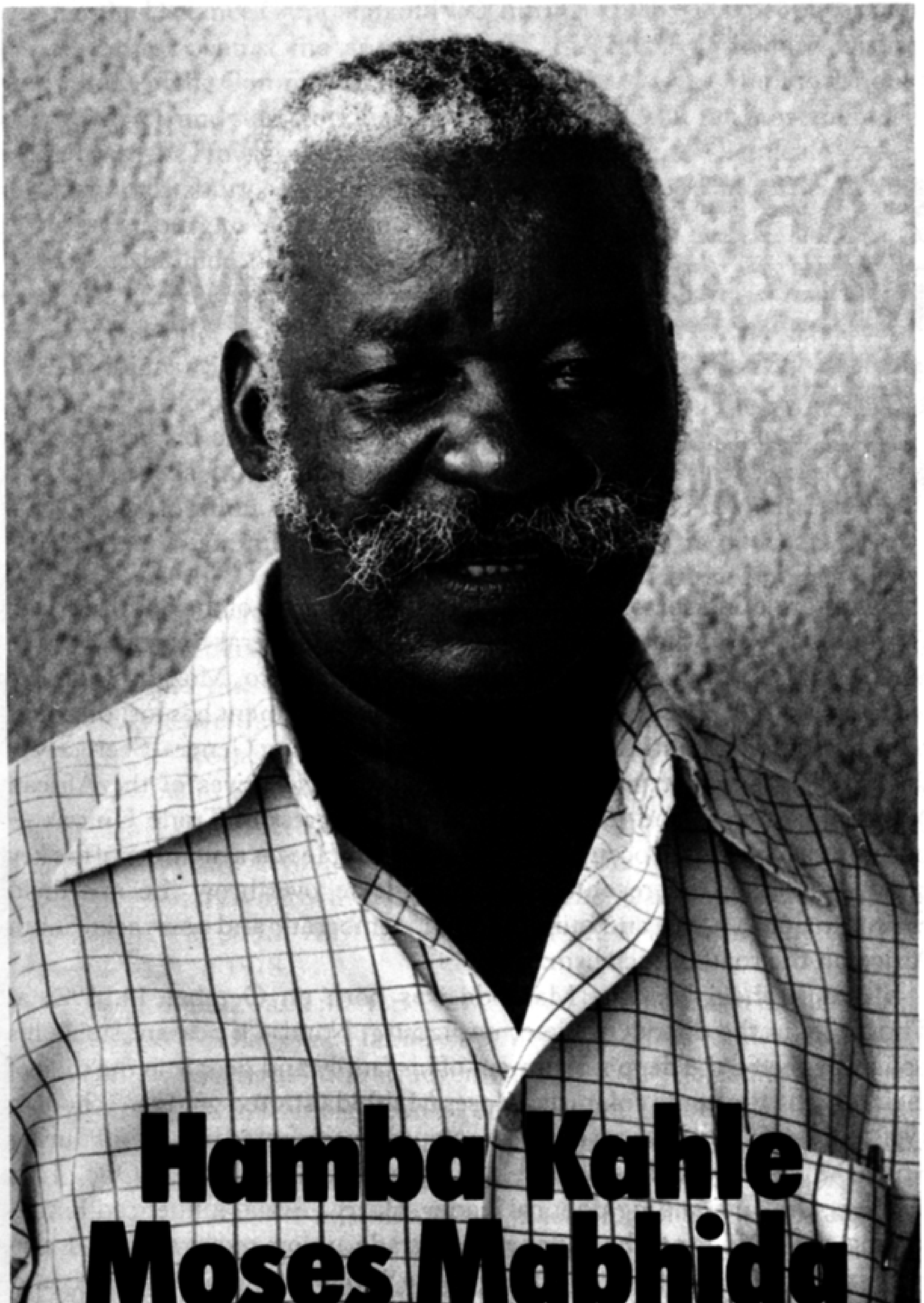
[2] Published in the volume *Southern Africa — The new politics of revolution,* together with essays by Basil Davidson and A.R. Wilkinson. Penguin Books.

Profound though his written contributions have been to our country's contemporary practice, they have been matched — perhaps outdistanced — by his practical part in the actual organising tasks of the party and Umkhonto, and by his involvement in the day-to-day actions of revolutionaries in the field. It is for his unique combination of practical tasks with his theoretical leading role that he was chosen as Chief of Staff of Umkhonto we Sizwe, and in 1985 was elected to the National Executive Committee of the ANC — the first South African white to be so honoured. He had served a long and distinguished apprenticeship — member of the Central Committee of the SACP since 1954, member of the ANC's Revolutionary Council since 1964. And now, finally, the well merited and thoroughly earned mantle of Chairman of the South African Communist Party, conferred with the unanimous endorsement of the Party activists scattered over several continents.

Titles and honours in an organisation of outlaws and revolutionaries are necessarily insubstantial, carrying no personal advantages or material rewards; they are perhaps mainly symbolic of the regard in which the recipient is held by his colleagues and comrades. Yet Joe's elevation to the position of Party Chairman has a further symbolism. Like those of Andrews and Dadoo, it symbolises the new era in which our Party lives and fights — the era of revolutionary struggle for the final liberation of the South African people, the era of deep fraternal unity with the ANC and collaboration in action of Communist and nationalist freedom fighters, the era of Umkhonto we Sizwe and of the young men and women — the township revolutionaries — who are at the spearhead of the revolutionary upheaval now poised for victory in South Africa.



Hamba Kahle Moses Mabhida

FAREWELL MESSAGE FROM SACP CENTRAL COMMITTEE

It is with profound sorrow that the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party announces the death of the General Secretary of the SACP, Moses Mabhida, on March 8, 1986, in Maputo, Mozambique. He was 62 years old. The South African liberation movement has lost one of its most outstanding political leaders. In addition to being General Secretary of the SACP, he was a member of the national executives of the African National Congress and the South African Congress of Trade Unions — positions which he had occupied for many years. He was a member of the key organs directing the revolutionary struggle to overthrow the apartheid regime in South Africa and build a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa on the road to socialism.

Moses Mbheki Mncane Mabhida was born on October 14, 1923 at Thornville in the district of Pietermaritzburg, Natal. Of peasant stock, his politics reflected the deep resentment of his family and people at the theft of their land by the white colonists. Moses Mabhida started going to school in 1932 and benefitted from several years of study interrupted by periods during which he had to work as a herd-boy for one shilling a week. One of his teachers, the outstanding political leader, Harry Gwala, influenced him in joining the ANC and the independent trade union movement and also explained to him the vital role played by the Soviet Union during the Second World War. In December 1942 Moses Mabhida joined the Communist Party.

After the Defiance Campaign of 1952, during which 8,000 people went to jail in protest against the apartheid laws, the Pietermaritzburg District Committee of the Communist Party suggested that Moses Mabhida should give up his job and start working full-time for the trade union movement. He started with the Howick Rubber Workers' Union and the Chemical Workers in Pietermaritzburg. His political and trade union work spread from Pietermaritzburg to Durban and other parts of Natal.

Moses Mabhida played a big part in the preparations for the historic Congress of the People in 1955 where the Freedom Charter was adopted. 1955 was also the year of the foundation of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (Sactu). As an active trade unionist Moses Mabhida was invited to participate in Sactu's first Ccongress in Johannesburg in March and was elected one of the four Vice-Presidents. As chairman of the local committee of Sactu, he built up the trade union movement in Natal to a high pitch of organisation. During this same period he became chairman of the ANC working committee in Natal and chairman of the Durban District Committee of the Communist Party. In a period of intense mass activity, Moses Mabhida was at the heart of every campaign.

Following the declaration of a state of emergency by the racist regime after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, Moses Mabhida was ordered by his comrades to leave the country and organise solidarity actions abroad. For some time he worked as Sactu representative at the World Federation of Trade Unions. In 1963, while still attached to WFTU headquarters, Moses Mabhida was instructed by ANC President OR Tambo to leave the solidarity field and devote himself full-time to the work of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the liberation movement. He was elected General Secretary of the South African Communist Party following the death of Moses Kotane in 1978.

Moses Mabhida was a man tried and tested in a thousand battles during the course of the national liberation struggle. He was known, loved and respected throughout the movement for his steadfastness and determination, for his far-sightedness and wisdom, for his steadiness under fire, for his loyalty and consistency. Placing the interests of his people and his class above self, he devoted his life to the cause of emancipation, never sparing himself, ready to answer any call made on him by his comrades. He was a gentle man but possessed of an iron will.

He was not only an African nationalist and patriot, but also a proletarian internationalist, convinced by his readings of Marxism-Leninism as well as by his own experience of the indestructible link between the forces of national liberation and the international communist movement. He studied and travelled widely in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, and met many of the world communist leaders at international meetings and conferences. On his sixtieth birthday he was awarded the Soviet Order of the Friendship of the Peoples and the Order of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, First Class.

In a speech commemorating the 60th anniversary of the SACP in 1981, Moses Mabhida said:

'Our Party's stand as far as national liberation goes in South Africa is quite clear. It fully supports the same programme of liberation as the African National Congress, for the seizure of power and black majority rule. The National Liberation Movement, to quote Lenin, 'is a necessary ally of the proletarian revolution'.

'We condemn in absolute terms the conspiracy between the United States administration and racist, fascist South Africa. The conspiracy is aimed against the struggling people of South Africa, the oppressed people of Namibia, the frontline states and indeed the whole independent African continent. The US administration policy towards South Africa is aimed at securing and protecting imperialism, capitalist interests in Southern Africa, and further exploiting and plundering the human and material resources of this region.

'The struggle of our people and our Party is thus a struggle against racism, colonialism, imperialist exploitation and oppression, for liberation, human dignity and peace'.

The South African Communist Party dips its revolutionary banner in solemn tribute to a great freedom fighter whose life and work are an example and inspiration to all his comrades and to all who love peace and social progress.

March 8th, 1986

STATE FUNERAL IN MAPUTO

The funeral of Moses Mabhida at Maputo's Lhanguene cemetery on March 29 provided the occasion for an extraordinary demonstration of fellow-feeling on the part of the people of Mozambique and South Africa directed against the apartheid regime of repression and aggression.

The Mozambican government gave the general secretary of the SACP a state funeral with full military honours. Leading the mourners at the funeral were President Samora Machel, SACP chairman Joe Slovo, ANC President Oliver Tambo and SACTU general secretary John Nkadimeng. With them were Moses Mabhida's widow Lena and other family members, and leading figures including ANC treasurer general Thomas Nkobi, SACTU President Stephen Dlamini and ANC executive member Dan Tloome.

Mourners representing every sections of the liberation movement at home and abroad attended the funeral. A party of about 150 came from South Africa by bus, train, car and plane, amongst them Dorothy Nyembe, Gladys Manzi, Archie Gumede, Russell Mphanga, Josephine Bhala and Curnick Ndhlovu. President Machel provided a plane to bring a party of Moses Mabhida's comrades from Lusaka. Others came from even further afield, including a delegation from Moscow representing the CPSU. The Frelimo Party was also strongly represented.

Before the funeral the body of Moses Mabhida lay in state in the Maputo Town Hall, the coffin draped with the flags of the ANC and SACP, at its head a portrait of the deceased. In the background were four flags — those of the SACP, ANC, the Frelimo Party and the People's Republic of Mozambique. A guard of honour from the Mozambique armed forces stood motionless beside the coffin.

President Machel and members of the Mozambican government filed past Moses Mabhida's coffin before signing a book of condolence. They were followed later by leaders and members of the South African liberation movement and members of the diplomatic corps.

A brochure produced for the occasion, containing the programme for the lying in state and the funeral, carried on its front cover a portrait of Moses Mabhida and on the back cover, in striking colour, the flags and symbols of the ANC, SACP and SACTU, together with the statement, in English and Portuguese, by Oliver Tambo on ANC/SACP relations:

> "Ours is not merely a paper alliance, created at conference tables and formalised through the signing of documents and representing only an agreement by leaders. Our alliance is a living organism that has grown out of struggle".

On the morning of March 29, in the presence of Moses Mabhida's widow Lena and other close family members, Moses Mabhida's coffin was carried by pallbearers from the Mozambican Armed Forces from the Maputo Town Hall. The coffin was placed on a gun carriage and the funeral cortege proceeded to the cemetery. Mourners walked the last 500 metres, accompanied by singing from an ANC choir. Banners of the SACP, ANC and United Democratic Front of South Africa were carried, as well as banners proclaiming: "Long live the friendship between the Mozambican and South African peoples".

In his speech at the graveside, President Machel paid a warm tribute to Moses Mabhida and said:

> "His own country was denied to him while he lived, and now it is denied to him after his death. But he will not be buried on foreign soil, for Mozambique too is his country".

President Machel stressed the "indestructible fraternity of the South African and Mozambican peoples".

In his speech President Tambo thanked President Machel and the Mozambican people for the care with which they had looked after Moses Mabhida in his last days:

> "President Samora Machel, you have done more than your duty, you have exceeded our highest expectations, in the way you have gone out of your way, taking your people with you, to tend and honour one who was to you a comrade of long standing, a fellow combatant, a leader of the people of South Africa.
>
> "When Moses Mabhida departed, he was at peace because we too were in this city of revolutionary change. We were here as your guests and fellow fighters for peace, freedom and social progress. Our common enemies are on all sides. They think they have surrounded us together. What they do not know is that we are in their rear and on their flanks. It is their cause that is doomed".

At the conclusion of his speech, master of ceremonies Dan Tloome said:

> "At this hour of immense sadness we salute the government of Mozambique and its people for their unshaking solidarity with the oppressed people of South Africa in their struggle for freedom and independence".

As comrade Mabhida's coffin was lowered into the grave, a Mozambican guard of honour fired three volleys of shots. Then President Machel, SACP chairman Joe Slovo and ANC President Tambo laid wreaths on the grave.

Inside South Africa

The lifework of Moses Mabhida was also honoured in many centres at home. In **Maritzburg** 8,000 people attended a memorial service at the Edendale Lay Ecumenical Centre while a further 5,000 were shut out by security police obstruction. Among those present was Moses Mabhida's widow Lena.

Addressing the huge crowd, UDF leader Billy Nair said there were those who believed it was impossible for one man to play a significant role at the same time in the SACP, ANC, SACTU and Umkhonto we Sizwe, but Moses Mabhida had proved them wrong.

> "He believed in the principles laid down in the Freedom Charter and he worked towards them in every way possible".

If fighting for equality and justice meant being called a communist, "then I am prepared to be called a communist", said Nair.

Protesting against the security police interference, UDF President Archie Gumede said: "It is our democratic right to assemble peacefully and conduct meetings". UDF publicity secretary Lechesa Tsenoli said the police takeover of the memorial service was a blatant show of force.

> "Such an intrusion on the privacy of those who have gathered to pay tribute to a national hero was revolting", he said. "It is no longer possible to meet freely without police intervention".

The meeting was also addressed by UDF leaders Albertina Sisulu and Curnick Ndhlovu and by Moses Mabhida's son Henry Khehla Mabhida.

At **Port Elizabeth**'s Dan Qeqe Stadium a crowd of 20,000 gathered to pay tribute to their departed leader, raising clenched fists and observing a minute's silence during the course of a four-hour memorial service addressed by leaders of the United Democratic Front. A press report stated:

> "The heavy presence of security forces in Casspirs patrolling the perimeter of the stadium did not dampen spirits as singing crowds marched on the rugby field chanting 'Viva Mabhida'".

In **Durban** delegates to the conference called by the National Education Crisis Committee to discuss the situation in African schools over the last week-end in March stood with raised fists and observed a minute's silence in memory of comrade Mabhida. Later the conference decided to call for a national stayaway from work from June 16 to 18 to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the 1976 Soweto uprising.

In **Zimbabwe** Prime Minister Robert Mugabe sent a message paying tribute to Moses Mabhida at a memorial service at the University in Harare. The High Commissioner of Ghana, Mr Chris Hesse, said in a solidarity message at the memorial service that the injustice symbolised by apartheid cut its sharpest edge where the worker was the most exploited.

The **Atteridegeville/Saulsville** Residents', Youth and Women's Organisations in a joint statement described the death of Moses Mabhida as a loss not only to democratic people in South Africa but to progressive mankind the world over.

Other memorial meetings were held at centres in Africa and the rest of the world wherever the liberation movement has a presence — in London, Moscow, Berlin, Toronto, New York and many other cities. Messages of condolence were also sent by political organisations and prominent personalities of many countries.

The following are extracts from speeches at the Maputo funeral:

Samora Machel, President of Mozambique

On behalf of the Frelimo Party, the Mozambican State and entire people, we are bidding farewell to a man who united all the highest qualities of patriot, fighter in his people's cause and revolutionary.

Moses Mbheki Mncane Mabhida remains with us as a symbol of the highest values of the struggle of the African peoples, of workers of the world, and of the world revolution. His memory, the example of his life of total dedication to the cause of freedom, equality, democracy, social justice, progress, socialism and peace will for ever nourish the spirit of new generations, will live on in the victory he helped build.

Moses Mabhida was born into a society dominated by racism, by oppression and by brutal and unbridled exploitation. Like the vast majority of the South African people, he suffered in his flesh, from his birth, the status of a being denied all rights. The status of a citizen without right to a country, of persecution without a right to justice, of a worker without the rights to progress, well-being and dignity.

The lessons that Moses Mabhida's life have brought us stem from his youth. He drew on the experience of his father, Stimela Mabhida, a herdsman expelled by settler greed from the land on which he lived, worker, active trade unionist, convinced nationalist. As a young student he was closely tied to workers' organisations, a bond that would remain a constant in his life as a militant and revolutionary leader.

On the divisions imposed by the racist regime, Moses Mabhida found in the experience and struggle of workers a way to build a new reality. A reality named the people, surpassing tribe and race. A reality named freedom, overcoming oppression. A reality named democracy, eliminating minority rule. A reality named justice, casting down privilege. A reality named socialism, putting an end to exploitation.

To the building of this reality, to the hard but exalting struggle it demands, Moses Mabhida devoted all his effort, all his intelligence, all his courage, all his being.

Moses Mabhida, our brother, our comrade, felt as his own our freedom, our independence. He was an integral part of the Mozambican people.

Moses Mabhida will remain as a symbol of the indestructible fraternity of the South African and Mozambican peoples, of the profound identity of our peoples' struggles. Moses Mabhida leaves a part of his life in Mozambique. He chose to live out his last days with us, he chose to bid farewell to life on the frontier of his country. He preferred to remain here in a free country, close to his own.

He was denied his soil in life and it is denied to him after death. But he will not be buried in a foreign land. Mozambique is his country too. The Mozambican soil which he also loved and of which the struggle made him a brother will enfold him with love and respect. We shall be the guardians of his body, which is a banner of victories. Men who die fighting,who refuse to surrender, who serve the people and their ideals to the last breath are the victors. Moses Mabhida is a victorious combatant. His immense personality rests in the heart of all Africans, in the heart of all revolutionaries and lovers of peace. Dear Comrades, we bid farewell to Moses Mabhida with the sad duty of returning to the soil a comrade, a companion in the struggle, a friend and brother. But first and foremost we bid farewell to Moses Mabhida with pride. We are proud of his life, his battle, his steadiness, his courage, his dignity as a patriot, an African and a revolutionary. We are proud of his immortal contribution to the cause of freedom, justice, equality, democracy, socialism and peace.

Joe Slovo, Chairman of the South African Communist Party

The racists hate South African communists with a special venom. To discredit what we stand for they spread the myth that communists are a strange people from far away places who import foreign ideas from Europe which are dangerous for Africa.

The answer to all these outpourings lies before us in this coffin.

Comrade Baba Mabhida, the leader of South Africa's communists, personalised the real essence of our land and its people. He was nurtured by its very soil which he loved with a deep passion. His search for a way to win back for the people the land and its riches began in early youth. At the age of 19 he decided upon the answer; for him it was the theoretical tool of Marxism-Leninism and the South African Communist Party which wielded it along the road of struggle towards national and social emancipation. He saw in our militant working class the key force in the alliance of classes facing the enemy. Comrade Mabhida's name has now been indelibly added to the list of revolutionary giants like Albert Nzula, Johannes Nkosi, Moses Kotane, J.B. Marks, Yusuf Dadoo, Bram Fischer, and many others who took the same path.

It is no accident that all these working class and communist leaders also became outstanding figures in a national movement. They stood for a simple truth which could be easily grasped by every worker and peasant and, indeed, by every national patriot. For them, liberation was much more than the raising of a new flag, the singing of a new anthem and the allocation of fat political jobs to a small group of exploiters with black faces. They believed that there could be no real liberation without a return of our country's wealth to the people and without attacking racism at its roots — economic exploitation of the colonised working majority. It is this working majority which is the class core of the liberation forces. And they understood the indispensable role of the African National Congress as the mass revolutionary national movement which stands unchallenged at the head of our whole liberation front.

Like those who came before him, Comrade Mabhida could see no conflict between his leadership of the Communist Party and his role as a top leader of the African National Congress. Those who worked with him from Luthuli to Tambo recognised in him the qualities of a most devoted and disciplined national figure who fought unswervingly to build the African National Congress, to protect its integrity and its independence and to ensure complete loyalty by its members, at whatever level, to its internal democratic processes. And it is this pattern, born and developed in our own South African conditions, which laid the indestructible foundation of the alliance between the African National Congress and South African Communist Party. This alliance which has been further cemented by the life-work of our departed leader, expresses the indivisible link in our conditions between the class and the national struggle.

More than anything else the enemy would like to drive a wedge between the ANC and the SACP. The answer to the enemy's manoeuvres is being given by the masses in Cradock, in Mamelodi, in Gugulethu, in Soweto, in Alexandra township and in other centres of conflict where, side by side with the ANC flag, the workers and youth are defiantly also raising the red flag of our Party. And the news of this filled Comrade Mabhida's eyes with tears of joy in the last days of his life.

His love of our country and its people never stood in the way of his committed internationalism. He worked for many years as a full-time official of the World Federation of Trade Unions and looked upon the world working class movement as a fraternity of brothers and comrades. He had a special place in his heart for the first workers' state and the party which Lenin founded. Unending Soviet support of and solidarity with our struggling people had taught him the true meaning of proletarian internationalism and he always equated anti-Sovietism with anti-people.

Although the political struggle was his whole life those of us who had the privilege of working with him will also remember a human being with infinite charm, warmth and compassion. It was for the enemy that he reserved his unbending hatred and a mood of hard and cold determination. For the rest, his approachable simplicity, his generous laughter and his caring concern about even the smallest personal problem of a cadre, high or low, attracted respect and affection for him throughout the movement. That is why our great sadness today is tempered with happy memories of the man and his life-achievements.

O.R. Tambo, President of the ANC

We who have walked with giants know that Moses Mbheki Mabhida belonged in that company too. We who have filed among the ranks know that he was proud to count himself as a foot soldier. A colossus because he was supremely human, Moses Mabhida has departed from our midst.

A seeming void occupies his space, the air so still without his voice, without that quiet voice, that quiet laugh, like the pure note of a bugle. That voice rose from the depths of the Valley of a Thousand Hills and it multiplied, rose and grew and multiplied, reverberating from Durban's Curries Fountains until it was heard in Dar es Salaam and Havana, in Moscow and Managua, in London and Djakarta, in Beijing and Rio de Janeiro, in Prague and Washington. And in Pretoria, the centres and symbols of oppression and repression which are the Union Buildings and the Voortrekker Monument heaved and trembled as they received his message: 'An end to fascism, down with racism, freedom for my people'.

It is rarely given to a people that they should produce a single person who epitomises their hopes and expresses their common resolve as Moses Mabhida did. In simple language, he could convey the aspirations of all our people in their magnificent variety, he could explain the fears and prejudices of the unorganised, and he could sense the feelings of even the most humble among our people. Moses Mabhida could do all this because he was of the people, a product of the stern university of mass struggle, a product of the life experience of the exploited and downtrodden workers and peasants of our country. It was that university, that education, that experience, which inspired Moses Mabhida to join the ANC, the South African Communist Party and the trade union movement, a trade union movement which ultimately coalesced in the South African Congress of Trade Unions.

It was part of Comrade Mabhida's greatness that having quite early on understood the importance of the unity of these great movements, he succeeded in ably serving each one of them individually, and all of them together. He served them together as a collective front for national and social emancipation. Throughout Moses Mabhida's lifetime international reaction tried desperately hard and consistently to separate the three movements we have spoken of. It tried to separate the one from the other and to set them against one another. In this contemporary period we have seen determined efforts to separate the trade unions from the broad democratic movement and to persuade them to be nothing more than an agency to bring material benefits to a working class which remains enslaved. But Moses Mabhida knew that the very dignity of labour demands that those who toil should not only enjoy the fruit of their sweat, but should do so as free men and women. Accordingly, he fought against all attempts to turn the trade unions into appendages of the property owning classes and he resisted all efforts to *emasculate the working class* as a *leading* social force for political change in our country. Likewise, he was fiercely opposed to all manoeuvres which sought to educate the working class to repudiate its own history and to allow itself to be turned into a base for the creation of a new political formation separate from and opposed to the ANC and the Communist Party.

Moses Mabhida knew that the historic and urgent issue of the day in South Africa is the question of the transfer of power to the people. He saw in the ANC the unique and authentic vanguard to mobilise and lead our people to victory. None among us was more conscious than he that the African National Congress could only carry out its historic mission if it maintains the character it has come to assume. That character was that of a parliament of all the people of our country, representative of our future, the negation of the divisions and conflicts that racial arrogance and capitalist greed have imposed on our people. That is why Comrade Mabhida fought hard and long to ensure that nothing should turn the ANC into a rabble of black chauvinists or a clique of leftist demagogues. He battled against all conspiracies designed to weaken the ANC as a fighting organisation of the people, as a true national movement loyal to the great principles which inspired its creation and have guided it to this day.

Wherever Moses Mabhida is laid to rest, his grave shall be a place of pilgrimage to all those who love freedom as he did, a beacon to the future for all those who value liberty more than their own lives. Moses Mbheki Mabhida will be there when the trumpets sound the salute to freedom.

John Nkadimeng, General Secretary of SACTU

Comrade Moses Mabhida was a worker just like millions of our workers. He was a worker oppressed by racism, forced to carry a pass, cruelly exploited and unable to provide the necessities of life for his loved ones, because he was so poorly paid, because he was black in apartheid South Africa. He asked the question: 'Workers have built the wealth. They have made South Africa glitter with gold, but they have not a rag to cover their bodies. How does that happen?'

He began to understand why this was so and was determined to do something about it. These twin forces, the quest for knowledge and the need for action, raised him above ordinary men. Moses Mabhida recognised in particular the need to organise workers into trade unions as well as the essential unity of all workers irrespective of race, colour or creed.

Comrade Mabhida was instrumental in the initiation of Africa's trade union unity. In May 1961, he was present at the inauguration of the All African Trade Union Federation and again instrumental in the formation of the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity. He was known by trade unionists from Scotland to New Zealand, from the USSR to America, as the fighter for peace, for trade union unity, for socialism.

Workers of our country will carry on his work. Already the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions has shown that the seeds sowed throughout our land have germinated and grown strong.

Bearing the banners of the ANC, the SACP and Sactu which Comrade Mabhida carried aloft, they too will march along the same road to freedom of our people.

Archie Gumede, President of the United Democratic Front

The message from the United Democratic Front is more or less a President's tribute to our beloved comrade Moses Mabhida. I'm from Pietermaritzburg and he was from Pietermaritzburg — therefore you will realise there is a closer link between us than with other people not so situated. I know that he received his early education in Pietermaritzburg and that one of his teachers was a beloved comrade of ours, Harry Gwala, a member of the South African Communist Party who is at present serving a life sentence on Robben Island.

After he left school he became employed as a shop assistant and a clerk, so we have him first of all as a worker. While he was so employed he became a member of the Pietermaritzburg branch of the African National Congress. Shortly after that he became an assistant secretary and later branch secretary, a position he held until he left Pietermaritzburg to take up employment as a trade unionist in Durban. This was around 1957 to '58.

While he was in Durban he became assistant secretary of the ANC, Natal Province, and later Deputy-President of the ANC in Natal. The President at the time was the late Chief A.J. Lutuli, Nobel Peace Prize winner, noble son of Africa.

He played an important part in the £1 a day campaign which did a great deal to mobilise the workers in Natal. He was also involved in the potato boycott campaign which was directed at attacking the evil system employed by the government to arrest people on pass offences and then send them as a sort of indentured labourers to work on potato farms where they would be compelled to dig potatoes from the ground with their bare fingers. Many received injuries. He played an important role as well in the anti-pass campaign. In 1960 he was one of those who set fire to his own pass in protest against the pass laws. In 1960 during the state of emergency he evaded arrest for a number of months and afterwards left the country.

During the course of these struggles, he had the support of his wife, who also took part in some of the campaigns. I never heard her complain. Although he left her and went into exile, she remained loyal to him and was always full of praise for what he was doing. In that way she supported him in the struggle for liberation.

The whole liberation movement is poorer as a result of his death. We have lost a dependable and loyal comrade. He was completely free from racial prejudice and did not suffer from any of its complexes of inferiority or superiority. He set an example by his hard work and his loyalty to the cause of Africa's total liberation from foreign domination.

Dan Tloome, ANC National Executive

That the people of South Africa had confidence in Moses Mabhida was demonstrated by his elevation to the leadership of the SACP, ANC and SACTU. His performance in the movement was regarded as that of a man tried and tested in a thousand battles during the course of our struggle for freedom. He was known, loved and respected throughout the movement for his steadfastness and determination, for his far-sightedness, his firmness and cool-mindedness even at critical times. His political faith in the oppressed people was reflected in his patience and extreme tolerance. His political strength was based on his ability to unite the people. Above all, he was his own man, firm of character, unshakeable in his convictions.

Today Moses Mabhida is no more but his image remains as a beacon in our future struggle.

MESSAGES

The following are excerpts from some of the hundreds of messages received from fraternal parties, liberation and solidarity organisations and individuals throughout the world:

M. and Comrades Inside

Our hearts were filled with sorrow when we received the shocking news of the sudden untimely passing away of Baba Mabhida. This sad loss of one of the greatest and most dedicated leaders of our beloved country will not only be deeply felt by the family and the national liberation movement but also by the entire world communist movement as he was as much a staunch internationalist as he was a dedicated and loyal fighter for national liberation.

His shining example as a leader of our people was a source of pride; his steadfastness under fire was a source of courage; his excellent ethical conduct as a communist leader was a source of inspiration; and above all his wisdom and guidance as a father as he was affectionately called was without precedent.

Not so long ago he told us that death is the necessary end of life and that nobody is old enough to die. We continue in his words — akuhlanga lungehlanga — silele ngenxeba — we painfully miss him. We shall not mourn but we shall mobilise until we have built the classless society to which he had dedicated his entire life. The red flag will be hoisted even higher. (Message to Joe Slovo.)

Socialist Unity Party of Germany

Moses Mabhida won lasting fame as a leading functionary of the international communist and workers' movement as well as ardent fighter for the liberation of the oppressed people of South Africa from the manhating system of apartheid. The Socialist Unity Part of Germany will honour the memory of comrade Moses Mabhida as a true friend of our Party and our Socialist Workers' and Peasants' state.

Signed by **Erich Honecker,** general secretary of the Central Committee

Communist Party of the Soviet Union

Moses Mabhida was a prominent political figure of the African and international Communist, workers, and national liberation movement, a determined advocate of Marxism-Leninism, a staunch fighter against imperialism and racism, for peace throughout the world. As a sincere friend of the Soviet Union he had constantly striven for strengthening solidarity between the South African and Soviet peoples. The serene memory of Moses Mabhida will always remain in the hearts of the Soviet people.

Bulgarian Communist Party

The communists and all the progressive and democratic forces in South Africa part today with their true son, who has dedicated his life to the struggle against racism and apartheid, for the national liberation and social equality in a period when in the country all the forces have united against the hateful system of apartheid. With the death of the prominent revolutionary functionary of Africa, Moses Mabhida, the international communist and workers movement will suffer the great loss of a distinguished Marxist-Leninist, a dedicated fighter for unity and progress, for the triumph of Marxist-Leninist ideas on the African continent.

Communist Party of Vietnam

We are deeply shocked on learning of the passing away of comrade Moses Mabhida, an outstanding leader and staunch fighter of the working class and labouring people of South Africa. On behalf of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Vietnamese people we would like to convey to all our comrades and through you to comrade Moses Mabhida's family our deep condolences.

Communist Party U.S.A

The general secretary of the SACP was a vital force in the cause of the liberation of South Africa from the double bondage of the racist yoke of apartheid and the socio-political tyranny of the South African state monopolists and the transnationals of the U.S. and world imperialism. A great political struggle of our day, the people's democratic struggle in South Africa, bears upon the peace and progress of the world. International solidarity against apartheid tyranny in South Africa strengthened the people's cause the world over and fittingly honours the memory of Moses Mabhida and all who fell in the glorious cause which he served so well.

Signed by **Henry Winston,** national chairman, **Gus Hall,** general secretary, and **James E. Jackson,** member P.B.

Partido Kommunista ng Philipinas

Comrade Moses Mabhida had the unique distinction of being a leader in all of the three main sections of the liberation movement in South Africa — SACP, ANC and SACTU. In his life and work, therefore, he embodied the great principle of unity that has made this triple alliance the force that will destroy apartheid and build the new democratic and non-racial South Africa.

Signed by **Abril Miranda,** Political Bureau

Party of Progress and Socialism (Morocco)

We have all of us lost, in this comrade, an ardent South African patriot, a great revolutionary militant, a consistent fighter against apartheid and racism, a combatant in the cause of freedom, for the emancipation and co-operation of the African peoples, an active partisan in the struggle for socialism and peace.

Signed by **Ali Yata,** general secretary

Vanguard Socialist Party of Algeria

In carrying out the high responsibilities he assumed in the leadership of your Party, in the South African and international trade union movement, and within the military organisation of the ANC, comrade M. Mabhida constantly acted as an ardent patriot and a convinced internationalist.

Signed by **Khalfa,** for the Central Committee

Union of the Peoples of Cameroon (UPC)

We learnt with sadness of the death of Moses Mabhida. This misfortune comes on top of the already appalling bloody repression practised by the racist dictators of apartheid and the recent assassination of Olaf Palme, aimed at striking a heavy blow at the struggle of the South African people by eliminating one of its greatest supporters.

Signed by **Simon Kuissu,** deputy general secretary

Robert Gabriel Mugabe, First Secretary and President of Zanu (PF) and Prime Minister of Zimbabwe

On behalf of my party, the government and people of the Republic of Zimbabwe, I extend heartfelt condolences to you, the National Executive and the entire revolutionary masses of South Africa. We remember comrade Mabhida not only as an uncompromising champion of the rights of workers in South Africa but also as a seasoned politician and freedom fighter.

As we mourn this departed revolutionary and gallant fighter against the horrid apartheid system, we are in no doubt that other freedom fighters will pick up his spear and draw inspiration and courage from his selfless life and great sacrifices to ensure that his dream of a free and democratic South Africa shall be a reality.

People's Progressive Party, Guyana

Many of our Party leaders and cadres knew comrade Mabhida very well and he was greatly respected by the entire membership of our Party. We are confident that comrade Mabhida has left behind him a solid reserve of cadres from whose ranks will spring others to follow in his footsteps.

Signed by **Cheddi Jagan,** general secretary

International Liaison Dept. of the CC of the Communist Party of China

Shocked to learn that comrade Moses Mabhida, General Secretary of the South African Communist Party, passed away. We wish to express our profound condolence. (Message to SACP.)

Tudeh Party of Iran

We remember comrade Moses Mabhida as an outstanding communist who staunchly and selflessly struggled for the welfare of his people, as a prominent leader of the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the apartheid regime and the estblishment of a democratic system in South Africa, free from exploitation.

Communist Party of Great Britain

The struggle for the liberation of South Africa, in which Moses Mabhida played so active and courageous a part, is today reaching new levels. The activity and prestige of the ANC is at a higher level than ever before. The watchwords — make apartheid unworkable, make South Africa ungovernable — are daily becoming reality. The tireless activity of comrade Moses Mabhida and many thousands of others is bearing fruit. Our tribute to comrade Mabhida is to intensify our efforts to end British support for apartheid.

Signed by **Gordon McLennan,** general secretary

Polish United Workers' Party

We have known comrade Mabhida as a prominent activist and leader of

South African Communists who are struggling under conditions of continuous harassment for social and national freedom and as a committed organiser of the broad masses of people for their fight against the heinous apartheid regime. We have also known him as an internationalist and staunch fighter for the international communist movement.

Iraqi Communist Party

The noble cause that comrade Mabhida dedicated his life to, the cause of national liberation, socialism and world peace, will triumph.

Communist Party of the Sudan

Comrade Mabhida devoted all his life to the cause of the working class and the world revolutionary movement. The image of comrade Moses Mabhida will live forever in our hearts.

Signed by **El Tayeb Ali Ahmed** on behalf of the Central Committee

Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee

Comrade Mabhida was the very embodiment of a revolutionary and a patriot: simple but deep-thinking, calm but very determined, soft-speaking but unbending in questions of principle. His tremendous personal charm earned him and his great cause friends and supporters all over the world.

We used to rely very much upon his judgments and advice and considered ourselves very privileged to co-operate with him. The bright life of comrade Mabhida served and will ever serve as a source of inspiration for tens of thousands of young South Africans who join today the ranks of freedom fighters. His tremendous contribution to the cause of liberation of his people will rest forever in the glorious history of the freedom struggle in South Africa.

The victory of the noble cause of national and social liberation to which he devoted his entire life will be the best monument to this great son of Africa.

Organisation of Iranian People's Fedaian (Majority)

Your Party, the working class and all militant people of South Africa miss comrade Moses Mabhida when the struggle against the infamous apartheid regime has reached a climax. His passing away, no doubt, is a bitter and painful loss for all South African militants, but we are confident that your Party is able to capably, as always, continue his lifepath: the path to democracy, socialism and demolishing apartheid to final victory.

Farrokh Negahdar, first secretary

J.W. Musole, Provincial Political Secretary, United National Independence Party, Zambia

I join all those who have expressed condolences on this occasion to your organisation (ANC) and in particular to the Communist Party of South Africa.

On behalf of many consistent Zambian nationals who are also true friends of the late Comrade Mabhida, I would like to state and stress that we will miss him but we will continue to remember him for his proletarian internationalist stand, for his lifelong dedication to the struggle of the South African people and for his exemplary Communist lifestyle. Whatever the loss suffered, the South African struggle continues even at qualitatively higher levels.

R.M. Kawawa, Secretary General, Chama Cha Mapinduzi

Chama Cha Mapinduzi realises with great respect the noble and outstanding contribution comrade Moses Mabhida made in the struggle against apartheid and imperialism. He dedicated his whole life to the struggle for freedom of the peoples of South Africa from the abominable decadent apartheid policy.

Mengistu Haile Mariam, General Secretary of the CC of the Worker's Party off Ethiopia, Chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council and C-in-C of the Revolutionary Armed Forces

Comrade Mabhida was one of the braver sons of Africa whose whole life had been dedicated to the struggle against racism and apartheid in South Africa. In his proletarian internationalist outlook, comrade Mabhida always believed that the only way through which the world could free itself of all forms of oppression and exploitation and bring about a just and equitable social system is through the conscious struggle of the working class.

Sam Nujoma, SWAPO President

Comrade Mabhida was a dedicated freedom fighter who devoted his whole life to the cause of the liberation of South Africa and its people from the colonial yoke and the boer oppression. His contribution and work for freedom will always be remembered in the history of the struggle for liberation of South Africa, in particular, and of Africa in general. (Message to O.R. Tambo.)

Andimba Toivo Ja Toivo, SWAPO Secretary-General

The sudden death of comrade Moses Mabhida is a hard blow to the South African Communist Party in particular and the liberation movement in South Africa in general at this point in time when the combined progressive forces are gathering together their strength for a final push to destroy apartheid. (Message to SACP).

OAU Liberation Committee

Comrade Mabhida devoted his life to the struggle for freedom and liberty. From where he has left off, the struggle should be carried on until final victory.

Afonso Van-Dunem M'Binda, Member of PB and Secretary of CC of MPLA Workers' Party for external relations

The South African Communist Party and the ANC have lost one of their best cadres, an indefatigable fighter for a new social order and the well-being of the broad South African working masses.

(Message to SACP.)

Messages were also received, amongst many others from the Political Bureau of Polisario; Stephen Nkomo, ZAPU Secretary for International Relations; Ibrahim Zakaria, WFTU General Secretary; the Luanda embassy of the Saharaui Democratic Republic; the IUS Secretariat; Lucio Lara, First Secretary of the Angolan People's Assembly; the Lauanda Embassy of the People's Republic of Congo; the Secretary-General of UNIP, Lusaka; Dapo Fatogun, Editor-in-Chief of *New Horizon* Nigeria; the Yugoslav Embassy, Dar es Salaam; Libyan Committee of Solidarity and peace, Tripoli; AASU Secretariat, Accra; Richard Andriamanjato, President, and Gisele Rabesahala, Secretary General, A.K.F.M. Party, Madagascar; Bayardo Acre, PB member Sandinista Front of National Liberation, Nicaragua; Algerian Ambassador, Luanda; Communist Party of Japan; Palestinian Communist Party; DanishCommunist Party, Left Party — Communists, Sweden; Turkish Communist Party; French Communist Party, Communist Party of Argentina; Socialist Party of Australia; Communist Party of the Netherlands; Italian Communist Party; Akel of Cyprus; Communist Party of Lesotho;; Communist Party of Lesotho; Communistk Party of Greece; Communist Party of Czechoslovakia; Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party.

THREE STREAMS OF THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE

The following address was delivered by Jack Simons at a memorial meeting to Moses Mabhida held in Nakatindi Hall, Lusaka, on March 29, 1986:

Three streams of radical thought and practice went into the making of this great revolutionary, our hero Moses Mbheki Macane Mabhida — or, as he liked to be called among comrades, Baba Moses!

The streams flowed from active participation in three major components of the movement for the liberation of South Africa from white domination. One was the Communist Party, another the African National Congress, the third the trade union. He rose to leading positions in each, acquiring a great store of experience and understanding. His advice was sought and freely given throughout the movement.

Trade Unionist

His family background was similar to that of tens of thousands of dispossessed and landless villagers who migrated to towns in search of wage earning, Stimela, his father, found employment in Pietermaritzburg, the administrative capital of Natal; the mother, Anna Nobuzi, died in 1928 when Moses was only five years old.

He left school in 1941 with a standard seven certificate. During the last year of schooling, he had the good fortune to come under the influence of a young teacher, Themba Harry Gwala, later to become a union organiser, ANC leader and political prisoner, serving a life sentence for attempting to overthrow the racist government and destroy apartheid.

Moses took the first big step to the life of a revolutionary in December 1942 by joining the Pietermaritzburg branch of the Communist Party. It did not provide members with paid jobs, but expected them to earn a living as best they could while spreading the Party's message.

In 1952, the year of the Defiance Campaign, he became a full-time union organiser. Three years later he helped to found the S.A. Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) of which he was elected a vice-president. In 1960, after the upheaval sparked off by the massacre at Sharpeville, he was sent abroad to represent black workers at the World Federation of Trade Unions.

Congressman

A second stream of revolutionary consciousness flowed from participation in the liberation struggle during the turbulent years that followed the coming to power in 1948 of the hated apartheid government.

Its annual crop of obnoxious racial laws aroused increasing resentment expressed in numerous campaigns organised by the parties of national unity and inter-racial solidarity.

They stood in the way of the drive towards Afrikaner hegemony through strategies of forcible removals, ethnic segregation, splintering of traditional communities and revival of tribal nationalism.

To remove the obstacles the racist regime outlawed the Communists in 1950 and Congress in 1960. This violent assault on basic freedoms had the opposite effect to that intended. It consolidated the alliance of radical, progressive forces, precipitated a recourse to armed struggle, forced thousands of resisters into exile and invigorated the world-wide offensive against apartheid.

Party members were, and still are, expected to be active in mass organisations — a trade union, women's section, local community or branch of the liberation movement — according to taste and circumstances. Moses needed no persuasion to join Congress in the war years when it was slowly recovering from a decade of sluggish uncertainty. His party commitments, working class outlook and national zeal impelled him into the struggle for the overthrow of white supremacy.

He rose in due course to the position of chairman of the Congress working committee in Natal, secretary of the revolutionary council, member of the national executive committee and one of the small select group of intimates known informally as the President's Council.

Party Member

His membership of the Party gave him insight into the roots of capitalist exploitation and its connection with national oppression. In later years he attributed his most important intellectual advance to recognition of the origins and necessity of an alliance between "the Party and the African National Congress, between social revolution and national liberation, between socialism and majority rule".

In the Party, as in other organisations of the revolution, he took a leading role as chairman of the district committee in Durban and subsequently member of the political bureau of the central committee.

His election in 1983 to the position of general secretary was a fitting recognition of his wise leadership and many-sided contribution to the struggle.

Fourth Dimension

Another component of Mabhida's world outlook was rooted in a deep attachment to his traditional Zulu culture.

He invoked the names of great rulers — Dingiswayo, Shaka and Cetywayo — who had welded clans and tribes into a nation, to stress the need of unity against present-day descendants of Boer invaders and British empire builders.

Quoting Frederick Engels, who praised Zulu impis for defeating British infantry at Isandhlwana in 1879, he told his audience that he had learned from Marx, Engels and Lenin to trace the connection between industrial capitalism, colonial plunder and imperialist expansion.

In a recent article he noted that Marx's account of "primitive accumulation" was verified by Zulu history:

> "In Natal, as in other provinces, one might observe the effects of expropriation of African land by white settlers and their governments, who herded us into 'reserves' (nowadays called Bantustans) forced us through taxes and recruiting agents to leave our villages for the labour market, and made us work as migrants under contract for less than subsistence wages".

Unity in Action

In tracing the sources of Mabhida's philosophy, we find no conflict between his various streams of consciousness and forms of organisation. In his thinking, ANC, SACTU and the CP were fighting a single battle against a common enemy. He put this thought into words in an address to an ANC Youth Conference in August 1982, saying:

> "Our (party's) alliance with the national liberation movement has stood the test of time and the strains of illegality. There are no significant differences of policy or strategy between us, we are comrades in arms, share a common purpose, confront the same enemy and are committed to a single goal, the overthrow of the racist autocracy and the achievement of a people's democracy under majority rule".

When Mabhida joined the Party in 1942 it was struggling desperately to forge a people's front against fascists and racists — the Blackshirts, Greyshirts, Ossewabrandwag, Broederbond, Pirow's New Order and the Malanite opposition to the war effort including the Great Patriotic War in which 20 million Soviet citizens lost their lives.

Mabhida would say in later years that he had served his political apprenticeship during stormy years leading to the defeat of the Nazi-Fascist-Japanese Axis, the forming of the United Nations and the beginning of decolonisation.

Nearer home, 70,000 African miners downed tools in 1946. In a series of events arising from the strike, the political bureau of the Communist Party was put on trial for sedition. The case was still before the courts when the Afrikaner National Party came to power in 1948 on a platform of Apartheid, banned the Party in 1950 and the ANC in 1960. MK was formed and the armed struggle began.

25 Years Later

A quarter of a century has passed. The Afrikaner National Party is still in power, practising state terrorism to stop the advance of the national democratic revolution. Auxiliary troops, like the Afrikanerweerstandsbeweging, perform the same function as the shirt movements and Ossewabrandwag 50 years ago, but more violently, shooting down demonstrating resisters in black suburbs. It might seem that the essential elements of white terror have not changed.

What has changed is the spirit, the consciousness of the oppressed majority. The People's War has become a reality, even though the people, untrained and unarmed, are forced to defend themselves with sticks and stones against tanks and armoured cars.

Our revolution is taking place at a time of great danger,greater even than that danger which Moses encountered at the beginning of his apprenticeship.

Writing three years ago, he drew attention to powerful groups in USA and the West which were looking for a way out of the profound, many-sided crisis of world capitalism. He alluded to the main trends arising from attempts to find a solution to the threat of nuclear war.

- An aggressive industrial-militarism was seeking to divide the world into two camps.
- Monopoly capitalism and its governments were conducting a many-sided campaign to discredit and destabilise socialist countries.
- These efforts, backed by large-scale unemployment and the divisive influences of social democracy, were demoralising sections of the western working class.
- Unfavourable terms of trade, enormous external debts and the mismanagement of resources have made the poor, underdeveloped countries receptive to pressures applied by finance capital and market economies.

Southern Africa

Our revolution has become one of the four or five focal points of the global conflict. These are:

- Palestine, Lebanon and Libya.
- Middle East Oil States, especially Iraq and Iran.
- South America, in particular Nicaragua, Honduras and Cuba.
- Afghanistan, a springboard for war against the Soviet Union.

In all these regions Washington uses arms, money and underground agents in an attempt to weaken and destroy radical socialism and its allies.

This is the situation also in Southern Africa. Briefly stated:

- Angola, an independent sovereign state, is the victim of direct intervention by the United States which provides arms and money to its agents for armed rebellion against the government.
- Namibia continues to be a colony of South Africa in spite of repeated demands by the United Nations and world opinion for its total independence.
- The racist regime sends troops into neighbouring states, kills unarmed people, and compels governments to close the doors to refugees and freedom fighters.
- The world condemns apartheid but the racist regime remains in office, backed by Western powers that condemn it in words and support it in practice.

Our Friends

Our revolution is deeply indebted to organisations and countries in Africa that have given us great material and moral support in our years of struggle. Special mention should be made of Zambia and its enlightened leader, President Dr. Kaunda, who has stood by us in many difficult periods and never relaxed his principled stand against racism, neo-colonialism, imperialism and apartheid. We owe much also to the Organisation of African Unity which has unfailingly sponsored our cause.

Among Western countries Sweden and Holland have been of great assistance. Our main allies in Europe, however, are the Soviet Union and other members of the Warsaw Pact. They gave us much material aid and perhaps, even more important, facilities for education, training and inspiration.

For the most part, the countries of Western capitalism have tended to ignore our movement, even boycott our revolution, instead of supporting the boycott against apartheid. More recently, the Western countries associated with NATO have shown some anxiety to draw us away from the socialist countries.

As part of this strategy, pressure is being applied to detach the African National Congress from the South African Communist Party.

These divisive attempts will fail. We look forward confidently to even closer ties between the parties of national unity and partners in the South African revolution. The goal of closer unity will be reached because of the wise leadership of our President Comrade Oliver Tambo and the dedicated work of great communists such as Moses Mabhida, Moses Kotane and their predecessors who combined a deep commitment to the Party with complete loyalty to the cause of national liberation.

In paying homage to Baba Moses, we honour also the many freedom fighters who have fought, died and suffered imprisonment for freedom from white supremacy, for equality and socialism.

THE BEGINNINGS OF PEOPLE'S POWER

— Discussion of the Theory of State and Revolution in South Africa

by Sisa Majola

A crisis of unprecedented scale has descended upon South Africa. At no other time in our history has the popular uprising of the masses rendered the apartheid system so unworkable and the whole country ungovernable; and at no other time has the apartheid power revealed such bankruptcy of both ability and strategy to survive. Focusing on the situation in the townships, the Editorial Notes of *The African Communist* (issue no. 103) of 1985 stated:

> "Indeed, the government is patently no longer able to govern in the old way. *In the townships,* its writ does not run at all, its institutions have been destroyed, and its emissaries and stooges driven out. The police and military, with the aid of bullets, batons, teargas, dogs, agents provocateur and undercover assassins, can manage to blast their way into and out of the townships, but all attempts to establish any form of civil authority responsible or responsive to Pretoria have come to nothing." ... In some areas we see the beginnings even of an alternative civil power set up by the people in place of the stooge councils which have been destroyed."

Today, our approach to the theory of state and revolution in South Africa must proceed far beyond an abstract projection of a remote "democratic" future in the coming years. Our method must establish guidelines for immediate revolutionary practice, because our revolution has already called forth organs of popular self-government. We must begin by seeking solutions to immediate and pressing practical needs in the actual areas of struggle, in Cradock, Tumahole, Thembisa, Mondlo, the Vaal Triangle and the Reef.

From the standpoint of practical politics, it is of little avail to canvass for the destruction of the oppressor state machine unless and until we have come up with some positive and concrete ideas as to the forms of organisation which are to take its place. We are not only theorists, but leaders of a real political movement; and this is precisely why we are obliged to examine the significance and the political essence of the organs of people's power that are emerging in the townships, an issue that has been raised by the destruction of the community councils and other dummy institutions.

What is to become of areas where apartheid organs of administration have been destroyed? How should the people relate to one another under such new circumstances? Through what sort of organs should the people exercise their political power in these liberated zones?

The emergence of community associations like Cradora cannot be left to chance. In his polemics against Duehring, Engels correctly argued that the forces operating in society work exactly like the forces operating in Nature: blindly, violently, destructively, so long as we do not understand them and fail to take them into account. But once we have recognised them and understood how they work, their direction and their effects, the gradual subjection of them to our will and the use of them for the attainment of our aims depends entirely upon ourselves.

Contest for Power

The time will soon come, if it has not come already, when we shall have to measure the level of the development of our revolution no longer by the number of strikes the workers have had per year, nor by the number of military battles we have waged during any given period, but instead by the number of people's communes we shall have helped organise in both town and countryside, building them on the ruins of the apartheid structures.

The principal objective of the national liberation struggle is the conquest of political power. Revolutionaries necessarily place the capture of political power at the very centre of their strategy and tactics. A revolutionary is only he who recognises that the end-result of our struggles against rent increases, rising transport fares, general sales tax, land dispossession or dummy institutions, is the acquiring of political power by the people, even if at first in only one district. Lenin said:

> "The basic question of every revolution is that of state power. Unless this question is understood, there can be no intelligent participation in the revolution, not to speak of guidance of the revolution".[1]

Present political problems in South Africa are going to be resolved either in the interest of the Botha regime and its allies, in which case oppression continues even if in its reformed variety, or in the interest of the people, in which case a step to liberation shall have been taken.

The apartheid state, like every other state in history, is a coercive instrument used by one class to retain its superiority over all other classes; it rests on the standing army, police, prisons,courts, community councils, bantustan administrations, spies — it is these organs that guarantee the rule of the racists and monopoly capitalists over our people.

The true antithesis to the community councils and the bantustan administrations are the people's communes that are already springing up out of the mass uprising. The true antithesis to the apartheid regime itself is a people's republic. (I am using the term "people's commune" to define the political essence of what has developed in the townships because the term "Committee" would be quite misleading, giving an impression of something like the "Soweto Committee of Ten". Cradora or the Vaal Civic Association, however, is not a mere committee but a political community of the people.)

Between the period of apartheid rule and the creation of a people's republic in South Africa, there lies the period of bitter struggle between the oppressor and the people, which will be won in each area by the destruction of the enemy's organs of administration and the setting up of revolutionary people's communes in every victorious district.

There is no possibility of coexistence of the apartheid organs of administration and the organs of people's power. These two institutions stand in flat contradiction to one another. Setting up popular organs of self-government on the ruins of community councils and bantustan administrations is the only practicable and immediate solution to the problems in our present struggle. The creation of people's communes will achieve for our people the immediate tactical advantage of consolidating our achievements, and will also provide a practical school for our people in the long-term strategic objective of building a democractic people's state.

What Is Meant By People's Power?

The urgent political tasks of the people's commune — Cradora, Vaal Civic

Association, etc. — is to carry out the political measures which are summed up in the Freedom Charter, and also the economic measures which are the substance of our national democratic revolution.

We want to control every aspect of our political life, we have chosen to completely sever all relations with apartheid. Every man in the townships and in villages must participate actively and independently in the organisational programmes of the civic associations. Through these associations people have at last discovered direct participation in democratic life and have begun to build people's democracy. Political power no longer flows from the top downward to the people (who remain passive objects of administrative directives in such a case), but from the bottom upwards, from the masses themselves to their democratically elected committees. People do not need supervision by superintendents and administration boards. They want elected leaders who are directly answerable to them, unlike the stooge community councillors, or parliamentarians for that matter, who assume power above those who elected them, are not answerable to them, and become immune from the very laws they pass for the people. The executive committee of the people's commune will not be a mere contingent of law-givers who officiate in air-conditioned offices hundreds of kilometres from their constituencies. We do not need representatives who stand apart from the people, we shall elect people who are typical of our kind of democracy, which Lenin defined as:

> "Democracy from below, democracy without an officialdom, without a standing army; voluntary social duty guaranteed by a militia formed from a universally armed people — this is a guarantee of freedom which no tsars, no swashbuckling generals and no capitalists can take away."[2]

This is a far more real democracy than that practised under the present parliamentary systems in the capitalist countries. We do not only need representation along democratic lines in the existing parliaments and municipal councils, but the building of the entire state administration from the "bottom up" by the masses themselves, ensuring their actual and effective participation in all spheres of life, their active role in the administration. We envisage, with the emerging people's communes, ordinary workers and peasants, revolutionaries whose criterion of leadership ability shall not be the holding of a doctorate or master's degree in political science or public administration, but their own experience and commitment to the demands of the people, getting together to run the affairs of the community.

Lenin's conception of a citizen in revolutionary circumstances was a politicised man, an actor in his own destiny, asserting his control over his environment. To this kind of man, the state is no longer an alienation. Lenin argued that even in the so-called complex capitalist system, "the great majority of the functions of the old 'state power' have been so simplified and can be reduced to such exceedingly simple operations of registration, filing and checking" that they can be taken over and run by ordinary working people and performed for ordinary workingman's wages. Lenin further insisted that these functions can and must be stripped of every semblance of "official grandeur".

Bourgeois parliamentarians may accuse Lenin of exaggerating the ease with which the modern complex state organs can be taken over and run by the ordinary working people. They may even point to the fact that even the great Soviet Union today insists on the development of higher education for its citizens, that the officials who run its state affairs are learned men in economics and political science. Agreed. But we must understand exactly what Lenin's point was. It was not to glorify the then low educational and cultural attainments of the ordinary Russian workers. His projection was based on urgent practice (not abstract theorising), on the concrete reality that, in fact while the bourgeoisie sit comfortably in their offices, it is the workers themselves that carry out production and economic administration in industrial plants. This perspective did not reflect a false faith in the workingmen. We in South Africa, who have begun to create our own people's communes, have to choose between the administrative bureacracy of the community councils and the superintendents (who enforce our oppression) or people's democracy through the people's communes (even if they are accompanied by some mistakes due to our inexperience at this stage).

But is there any way other than practice and actual experience by which the people in revolution can learn to govern themselves and avoid mistakes? At the present moment, while we are still struggling for full political power in the whole of South Africa, when our immediate task is to provide administration for our newly liberated districts, we prefer rather to go along with a few mistakes and errors here and there rather than revert back to the old oppression of the rent and tax system by the Administration Boards. That we are as yet unlearned in the complexities of public administration and economics, we do not deny, but we shall learn. And when we have built people's power in the whole of South Africa, having expropriated all foreign monopoly industrialists and bankers of the people's wealth, we shall also have enough money in our coffers to hire skilled technicians and scientists to keep our industries going, while we and our children shall be upgrading our educational standards for such jobs, at present denied us by the apartheid system. The main thing now is to imbue the masses of our people with self-confidence in their own strength and ability to administer their own affairs. Let us create these conditions, and we will all be there to witness the tremendous revolutionary enthusiasm and creative ability that our people will show, as they proceed to link one people's commune with a neighbouring one, working out joint projects and engaging in common tasks.

People's Democracy Means the Dictatorship of the People

Just as the apartheid state uses its coercive apparatus to protect the interests of the ruling class, so should the people's communes create organs of coercion to defend the hard-won people's democracy in each district. Democracy is only one of the forms of the state, a certain variety of it. And since it is in fact a state, it is (in Lenin's words)

> "the organised, systematic use of force against persons; but on the other hand, it signifies the formal recognition of equality of citizens, the equal right of all to determine the structure of, and to administer, the state."

Our own people's democracy in South Africa means the implementation of the Freedom Charter. But we will never effect the Freedom Charter even in a single district in South Africa without at the same time overcoming the resistance of the organs of the apartheid state. People's power is directed against the forces that are hostile to people's interests. No people's commune can last indefinitely in our revolution if it does not create its own coercive force, its own army and people's militia, its own people's courts of justice (even if, at first, justice has to be administered in the depth of the night) — in short, a dictatorship of the people.

The mere existence of these communes in the form we have just defined, posits an element of challenge to the SADF. Here then lies the significance of building a people's army and militia inside South Africa, the small mobile units that wage guerrilla warfare here and there, raiding armouries and arms dumps in order to secure weapons for themselves, but at the same time diverting the racist army and police from crushing the embryonic organs of people's power. The main question, therefore, is not the existence of the people's commune parallel to the apartheid structures in the same district. Our victory does not consist of our ability to boast of the existence of dual power in any district. The principal question is *which force will win the political supremacy over the other.*

In creating mobile combat units and people's militia, former soldiers and police who have renounced their former role as agents of the apartheid regime can be put to the service of the people, after they have proved a dozen times that they are not infiltrating the people's movement. When our revolution progresses, some individuals from the enemy army and police will desert their masters and seek refuge among the people. Genuine individuals can be accepted, politicised and given testing assignments against their former masters.

People's communes (as already indicated) aim at seizing control of every facet of life in their districts. Schools, rent offices, clinics, sports stadiums, beerhalls and other such state-owned infrastructure as exist in the townships should be transferred into the hands of the community, so that these services will cease to operate under the aegis of the apartheid state. When they are taken over and controlled by the people's communes, they will be directed towards the welfare of the people and not to the profits of the apartheid state — and in this way we shall institutionalise our revolution.

Schools run in such liberated districts can develop their own independent curriculi completely unconnected with the apartheid departments of education in exactly the same way as SOMAFCO is doing abroad. Clinics also can be placed at the service of the people, serviced by people's doctors and nurses — and all the habitual arrogance that used to be shown to our sick people by the racist-influenced medical personnel shall be transformed by the new and revolutionary relations among the people. Sports stadiums can play a crucial role in raising the much needed funds to pay the volunteer teachers, doctors and nurses, and to meet other revolutionary demands. There is nothing to prevent the people's commune from collecting modest rents and reduced taxes or even donations from the people, which they will give ungrudgingly provided they know that all the funds are directed to their own immediate interest which is total freedom from apartheid colonialism. Self-reliance is another aspect of revolutionary consciousness which must be inculcated among our people. The idea of depending totally and solely for material needs on solidarity donations from our friends for every little project we undertake must be replaced by self-help as our democratic revolution progresses.

Taking the War Into White Areas

People's communes must refuse to be corrupted with agreements by the neighbouring White municipal councils, some of whom have already realised the impossibility of destroying these communes and are suddenly showing eagerness to render them politically sterile, seeking to incorporate them into their petty administrative strategies — e.g. supervising the cleaning of the streets, policing those who roam the streets at night, ensuring punctual attendance of workers at work, etc. The Johannesburg City Council has attempted this with the Vaal Civic Association, and so also has the Uitenhage Municipal council declared its recognition of the people's commune existing at KwaNobuhle. The mayor of the last named town told the media that he is quite willing to co-operate with the people's committee leading the people of KwaNobuhle, and is ready to have periodical meetings with them to exchange views and essential programmes.

This strategy of the oppressor, if not analysed from the standpoint of our theory of revolution, can be quite dangerous for our present initiatives. I am aware that some people inside South Africa support the notion that the people's committees that lead the communes should "fight that these committees be included in the present White municipal councils". I want to differ with this notion.

Our demand is no longer to be allowed to participate in the present Johannesburg, Cape Town or Durban City Councils. Our strategy is to take the present war into white areas, and not to share power with any apartheid structure (which would in actual fact retain political and military power in such alliances). The immediate practical objective in extending the people's war into the white areas is to fight against the existence of the municipal councils, who occupy in the apartheid structure the same position in fact as the community councils which were occupying the townships. No lasting revolutionary gains can be achieved by working side by side with White municipal councils. Any hope of building people's power upon them, or adapting them to "the needs of the people", or hoping to influence or transform them, would be fruitless.

Our attempts to consolidate people's power in the Black townships and villages should never be misunderstood to imply that this is the end-result of our strategy. We are not fighting just to liberate and control Soweto, Gugulethu or Lamontville. Our final intention is to form a people's government in the whole country, and this includes Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. Let this intention not be hidden or obscured in any way, lest we obscure the very factors that make us differ from the liberal domocrats and reformists. White South Africa cannot be at peace while the Black townships are in flames. The comfort and security the Whites enjoy in their suburbs are the direct result of our oppression and exploitation.

This then is another dimension of our people's war: the creation of people's communes to include White democrats and all those Whites who do not want to be associated with the obnoxious apartheid system. People's communes provide yet another practical organisational basis for our perspective of a non-racial South Africa. To attempt to strive to be included in the White municipal councils would defeat the possibilities of the revolutionary Whites acting in unity with their Black countrymen to seize the cities and small towns and establish self-government.

The Lessons of the Paris Commune

Have we forgotten what Marx's attitude was to the state after the 1871 Paris Commune?

During the period of the 1848-50 revolutions both Marx and Engels, while they talked of the need for a workers' state to be a dictatorship of the proletariat, never, however, emphasised the need for the smashing of the ruling state power by the risen working class. They maintained, instead, that the communists should take over the existing state machine and utilise it to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to "centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible".[3] They repeatedly emphasised this need for the centralisation of political and economic power in the hands of the state which was to be dominated by the proletariat, because analysing as they did during that period the concrete realities from which they proceeded could only lead them to draw those strategic conclusions.

We must remember that the Germany of 1848 was not a single nation-state, but comprised a number of separate princedoms, which presented obstacles to the development of the modern productive forces (of which the working class is a part); so that, in fact, centralism became the most urgent and progressive stance in the given political environment. "As in France in 1793", they wrote in advice to their German comrades, "so today in Germany it is the task of the really revolutionary party to carry through the strictest centralisation."

But then came the 1871 Paris Commune! The practice of the Communards ushered in new realities and revelations. Marx's attitude to the State abruptly changed (or should we rather say 'developed'?). Typically Marx, who had never regarded theory as dogma or the world as static, then wrote in the Preface to the German edition of the 1872 *Communist Manifesto:*

> "... one thing especially was proved by the Commune, namely, that the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made State machinery and wield it for its own purposes."

In Marx's view, therefore, it was transparently clear that, proceeding from the model of the Paris Commune, the smashing of the existing state machine was to be put at the very centre of the political tactic of the revolutionaries. Still, its possession (the state) by the victorious people must not be regarded as the "principal spoils of the victor" (*The Eighteenth Brumaire*), but as a means to suppress the resistance of the former oppressors and to abolish the poverty and misery of the working people.

"Power-Sharing" — Discredited Idea

Reformists in South Africa, like Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and his allies in the Progressive Federal Party, have always questioned and even repudiated the applicability of our proposition of people's seizure of power in the present day South Africa. Pointing to the economic strength and military might of the ruling apartheid regime, they therefore conclude that no real liberation movement under these circumstances can effectively lead the masses to a victorious revolution and the transfer of power to the people. Chief Gatsha Buthelezi regards any talk of "people's power" in our strategy or political programme as mere propaganda rhetoric or even, for that matter, as dogmatic adherence to revolutionary theory. As a "pragmatist", he and the PFP are calling for a "National Convention" (which they feel the ANC must also attend together with its leaders in prison and in exile). They argue that, from a pragmatic point of view, "power sharing" is the only realistic solution to South Africa's problems.

Well, the ANC has always stood for people's power (it does not matter much in principle how that power comes, as long as it does actually come!). When the ANC ratified the Freedom Charter in 1956, thereby making it its own policy document, it was affirming its role as the custodian of the principles of people's power as mandated by the Congress of the People. But when the ANC todays say: "Power to the People", Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and the PFP shake their heads and call for: "Power Sharing". We then have reason to ask: "With *whom* do you expect the people to share power, gentlemen? Who are these *non-people* on whose behalf you are speaking?"

In 1961 when the ANC called for a National Convention to include the government of the day, in the belief that the government could still be brought to reason by peaceful negotiation, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi (then working as a clerk in the Bantu Administration offices in Durban) and the Progessive Party kept on the sidelines with their arms folded, while the apartheid monster unleashed terror and havoc against the members of the ANC and detained its leadership. Two decades later, when the ANC has built a mighty political army of people who are demanding the complete dismantling of apartheid, people who reject any "reforms" handed to them by the oppressor, people who have tasted power in the liberated townships, people who are already guided by the ANC strategy of final armed insurrection (as was resolved in the 1985 National Conference), suddenly Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and his liberal allies in the PFP start whispering to the ANC and shouting to the world: "We want a National Convention!"

Such a call from them cannot be called genuine. Their sudden infatuation with the idea of a National Convention (which to them means "power sharing") comes at the very time when Chief Gatsha Buthelezi is mouthing all manner of swear-words against the ANC and its leadership and letting his Inkatha impis loose against members of the UDF. Are we not therefore correct in concluding that all the talk about a "National Convention" is a tactic by the liberal gentry to defuse the dynamic movement of the masses who claim the ANC as their leader? People of South Africa (which the Buthelezis thought had forgotten all about the ANC) put the ANC as the central factor in South Africa's political equation. No serious political changes can ever take place in South Africa without the ANC and its leadership. And the ANC intends to lead a government in South Africa whose constitution shall be based on the Freedom Charter.

Nelson Mandela has replied from Pollsmoor prison that the idea of a National Convention has now outlived itself. Now is the time for the transfer of power to the people. In so far as our movement does not reject either negotiations or a national convention in principle, it is because such negotiations or national convention would have to lead to the dismantling of apartheid and the assumption of power by the people. No national convention which would leave power in the hands of the minority can ever be acceptable as the culmination of our national democratic revolution.

One thing however is certain, in my view, that what may come out of that "National Convention" would be hundreds of kilometres from the dismantling of apartheid. What would come out could never be the dismantling of the present racist army and police; at best agreement could be reached that a "new national" army be formed (which would absorb whatever force has been fighting Apartheid) and its top command posts logically monopolised by the educationally advantaged White soldiers and police. In such a "National Convention" (in which the top business community will necessarily participate), no industrialist will endorse a proposal for the nationalisation or control of his industry by any government, even if the argument is that"the people shall share in the country's wealth". White farmers in such a Convention may only compromise to the extent of agreeing to pay their farm labourers decent wages, but not"the sharing of the land among those who work it". And without some of these fundamental changes in South Africa's property relations, racist rule will remain intact in all its essential features. Such an outcome (to which our Congress can never be a party, of course) would fall far short of a national democratic revolution.

References:

1. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 24, p.38
2. Ibid., p.170.
3. Marx and Engels, *Selected Works* (in Two Volumes), Moscow 1962, Vol. 1, p.53.

AFRICA NOTES AND COMMENT

by Ahmed Azad

An Historic Conference

On the first and second of February 1986 the Party of Independence and Labour of Senegal (PIT) in conjunction with the *World Marxist Review* held an international Round Table discussion on "The Socio-Economic Development of Black Africa and problems of Democracy". The Round Table was attended by leaders representing all the main political parties of Senegal including the ruling Socialist Party, important personalities and intellectuals, trade unions and representatives from Nigeria, The French Communist Party and *The African Communist.* There would have been a wider international participation but the representatives of the *World Marxist Review,* the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic were refused visas; and those of Ethiopia and the Communist Party of Sudan were refused entry at the airport and immediately deported. The Ethiopian comrade not only held a diplomatic passport but also a legitimate visa issued by the Senegalese embassy in Addis Ababa.

For the first time in the history of black Africa such a conference was hosted by a Communist Party. The PIT comrades worked exceptionally hard to ensure the holding of the Conference, and its undoubted success can be gauged by the wide participation of all the main political forces of Senegal. These included representatives from the governing Socialist Party, associations such as "Club Nation et Developpment", "Groupe de Reflexion" and "Gresen" which are closely associated with the ruling party; opposition parties such as the Democratic League (LD/MPT), "Mouvement Democratique Populaire" (MDP), "Parti pour la Liberation du Peuple" (PLP), "Rassemblement National Democratique" (RND). The written contributions and the discussion interventions ranged over a wide spectrum of topics. The floor was taken more often by non-PIT speakers who expressed their views and feelings about the situation in Senegal, the continent and the world. It was indeed an open, frank and honest exchange of views and experiences which also demonstrated the depth of political maturity in Senegal.

The following is a brief account of the views of some of the non-PIT participants, extracts from the papers presented by Ablaye Diagne of PIT, Lemma of Ethiopia and Moseyva of the Soviet Union, and a brief summary of the concluding remarks of Seydou Cissoko and Amath Dansoke chairman and General Secretary respectively of the PIT.

Babikar Sine, who represented the President of Senegal, Abdou Diouf, made important contributions, though Marxist-Leninists of our continent would not agree with his findings. Whilst accepting that there is a close link between economic development and democracy, Sine does not feel that it is correct to talk about a good system and a bad system, since there are failures in both the capitalist and socialist systems. He does not agree with the concept of "socialist orientation" since all of the countries so defined are still within the grip of capitalism, and could return to the capitalist system. In any event, he argues, it is artificial to divide Africa into capitalist and socialist states, and the notion of the socialist camp as one block is no longer relevant.

Sine made a discourse into what is democracy and what kind of democracy do the people want, and posed the question: if the PIT took power would it continue to support the idea of pluralism? History, he claimed, showed that once the communists take power they dominate all political life and one party, the Communist Party, directs and dominates everything, and therefore he prefers bourgeois democracy. He criticised the Marxists for only speaking about the bureaucratic bourgeoisie since the bourgeoisie is a differentiated class and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie are to be found in the socialist oriented countries also. Sine argued that the ruling Socialist Party is not more reactionary than other parties in Senegal. It has an agricultural programme and much experience in this field, and has a clear programme to fulfil peoples expectations.

Problems of Transition

An interesting theoretical paper was presented by Yoro De, Political Bureau member of the LD/MPT. He dealt with the problems of transition in neo-colonial Africa, and argued for a clearer understanding of the objective laws governing the development of the transition economy. The transition phase is extremely complex especially with regard to the political weaknesses shown by the African countries. He also dealt in some detail with the problems of alliances, but rejected any alliance with the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. Yore De stressed that the problem of alliances is one of the most crucial questions facing the political forces in Africa. In this the worker-peasant alliance is central, but only the proletariat can lead the revolution to victory. He also pointed out that in the transition phase private capital has a role to play and it is not possible to nationalise everything.

Madior Diouf of the RND spoke about the problems created by the colonial legacy at the economic, political and cultural levels, He mentioned the difficulties caused by religion which does not allow individuals to play a full role in political life, and brought out the links between the Marabous and capitalism. He criticised leaders in Africa for clinging to narrow nationalism at a time when larger entities are necessary for development. Diouf argued that if these leaders cannot feed their people they should at least spare them the ravages of war. He felt that in thinking about African problems there was too often a mechanical application of foreign ideas, and insufficient attention paid to African reality.

Bakhao Sal of the PLP dealt with some of the terrible problems such as famine and desertification facing the people of Africa. Though he accepted that the international environment plays a big role in creating the problems he argued that one also has to look at the concrete local situation. The question of democracy is fundamental to resolving the most pressing problems facing the African countries. He called for the fullest participation of the masses in political life and to achieve this he argued more widespread use must be made of local languages including in the civil service. In dealing with the awesome economic problems he stressed that the economies of African countries had to be more integrated.

Ablaye Diagne, a lecturer in economics at the university of Senegal and a member of the PIT, discussed the problems of the debt of the African countries. He said:

"The debt is one of the mechanisms through which the African countries have again fallen under the yoke of the most ferocious imperialist exploitation. The debt constitutes a problem not only from the point of view of the banks and private transnational firms, but also from the point of view of the African population which pays for the debt by a draconian reduction in their living standards, the lowest of all the continents. It is at the centre of the aggravation of the economic and social crisis throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Lastly, it is the main factor in the growing loss of real power of most of the African countries in conceiving and applying their economic and social policies...

"One may identify five main causes of the massive indebtedness:

— The way in which African countries are integrated into the capitalist international division of labour

— the economic policies followed within that framework and in particular the forms of indebtedness and the use made of the resources borrowed from abroad;

— the armaments race into which imperialism has plunged Africa south of the Sahara;

— the harmful monetary and budgetary policy followed by Reagan to finance the new armaments programme of the USA from resources abroad;

— lastly, rescheduling policies...

"It is the internal/external relations of power which must be changed. The social forces in Africa who are currently the main victims of indebtedness and the strangulation policies of the IMF and the World Bank are the only force which can impose a reorientation of accumulation strategies in a manner which will assure them of real social progress.

"As long as such social forces do not emerge in the African countries the roots of impoverishment will remain intact whatever partial solutions may be found in improving the management of the debt, the elimination of certain aberrant forms of indebtedness, an increased 'transfer' of financial resources to the African countries, an improvement of the mechanics of rescheduling etc...."

In Ethiopia

Legesse Lemma in a comprehensive review of the achievements, problems and prospects of the national democratic revolution in Ethiopia dealt with a number of issues including foreign policy, imperialist attempts to destabilise the country, the counter-revolutionary activities of the separatist groups, the education system and the attempts to involve the broad masses in political life and mass organisations. The excerpts below however deal with two aspects of the economic policies pursued by the government and the Worker's Party of Ethiopia.

"Transformation of agriculture in the process of the national democratic revolution also calls for the development of productive forces. Efforts have been made in this regard. To mention but a few, the 'Agarfa' Multi-purpose Peasant Training Centre, founded in 1982 has already trained over 8,000 peasants in such fields as modern farming, animal husbandry and agricultural management. The 'Yekatit 25' Cooperatives Institute has the objective of training cadres and conducting research in cooperatives. The Nazereth Tractor-Assembly Plant, established in 1984 with the assistance of the Soviet Union and the first of its kind in the country is already making a significant contribution towards the modernisation of agriculture in the country. Efforts are also being made to supply both the cooperatives and private farmers with improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, improved farming implements and other assistances.

"Due to still predominantly backward agricultural practices and recurring drought, however, growth in agricultural production could not keep pace, on the average, even with the population growth. For example, crop production during the 1983/84 drought year is estimated as 4.6 million tons, or 30% below the production level of the previous year. This huge food deficit necessitated the spending of scarce foreign exchange for food imports despite substantial food assistance from the international community....

"In short, the laying of the foundation for the socialist transformation of agriculture, the attainment of self-sufficiency in food and the improvement of the standard of living of the society, as well as the generation of surplus necessary for the overall growth of the economy are at the centre of the country's agricultural policy designed by the Party....

"Since the country still has strong economic links with the capitalist countries, it is naturally affected by the worsening economic crisis of the capitalist world. Fluctuating export prices, on the average deteriorating terms of trade as well as inability to expand and diversify exports, among others, are causing a widening deficit in the balance of trade. This growing trend in the negative balance of trade is, naturally, having a formidable negative impact on the size of foreign exchange reserves of the country. The country's outstanding indebtedness to the rest of the world and its debt service have also grown recently to a substantial size. In short, analysis of the external economic relations of the country clearly shows that it was only appropriate that the 1985 austerity measures were taken. It also reveals the urgency for better coordination and increased integration of the country's economy with the economy of the world socialist system."

The Human Factor

Comrade Moseyva of the Africa Institute in Moscow submitted an interesting and thought provoking paper on "The Human Factor in Africa". The excerpts below show her approach to the question of the "popular masses" and consciousness.

"In its examination of the role played by the popular masses, Marxist theory regards this category as comprising those classes, social groups and strata which, under given specific historical conditions, become active participants in and shapers of progressive social transformations and act together with the masses of working people. As far as African countries are concerned, the concept of 'popular masses' includes those classes, social groups and population strata which have been involved in national liberation movements, in the drive for the decolonialisation of the social fabric, in the anti-imperialist struggle and today, in the struggle against neocolonialism and capitalism. On condition that those working class and social groups (industrial workers, peasants and other non-proletarian working strata) which create material values, shape culture and act as a vigorous revolutionary force are the backbone of the popular masses, the category in question also includes the middle strata, progressive intellectuals, patriotic quarters of the national bourgeoisie, etc.

> "The principle of reliance on the masses is central to the work of Marxist-Leninist parties. A party's organisational and ideological strength and its influence on the country's social fabric depend primarily on its contact with the masses. 'It is this contact,' Lenin wrote, 'that is the sole guarantee of our success.' He insisted on unflagging attention towards 'verifying carefully and objectively whether contact with the masses is being maintained and whether it is a live contact.' In African countries, party work with the masses is a very complex task because the masses are heterogeneous and include classes, social strata and groups differing in terms of economic and social development, ethnic and religious traditions. In elaborating the forms and methods of its work with the masses, an African party must therefore take these differences into account and devise distinctive forms of work to be used among peasants, workers, salary earners, women, youth (young workers and students), believers, etc."

S.A. Struggle

In a number of contributions the struggle in South Africa was highlighted. One of the speakers, a leading member of "Gresen", called for the formation of a continent-wide block of solidarity against apartheid. He stressed the importance of South Africa as a major factor of destabilisation in the region and in the continent as a whole. He criticised those African countries still trading with South Africa and castigated the imperialist powers for supporting apartheid, and called for solidarity with the combatants of the ANC. The speeches and comments on South Africa were an expression of the mass support enjoyed by our struggle and the ANC in Senegal. The walls of houses and shops in Dakar are covered with slogans condemning apartheid as a crime against humanity. Many of these slogans are written by school children. The president of Senegal, Abdou Diouf, is a prominent anti-apartheid campaigner, and is supported in this by all the opposition forces.

In his remarks PIT chairman comrade Sissoko touched on a number of important topics. He showed how imperialism is mainly responsible for the dire problems facing the people of Africa, and that by more rational use of the continent's internal resources it would be possible to develop and redress the economic hardships. Referring to the monstrous debt of the African countries he pointed out that the trans-nationals evade paying taxes, called for a whole new approach on the export of capital and on export of goods, and asked whether or not the time has come for the African countries to renounce their debt. He criticised the Senegalese Government for ignoring some of the most basic needs of the people such as a regular supply of water to the land, failure to preserve and utilise rain water etc. On the question of democracy he said that the ruling party does not invite the PIT to their meetings and that the PIT is excluded from the mass media thus depriving the people of the chance to hear an alternative point of view. He pointed out that the democracy now available in Senegal is not a gift of the government but a result of the fact that the Senegalese people never stopped fighting. The gains achieved have to be consolidated.

In his concluding remarks PIT Secretary-General Dansoko stressed that the participants had openly debated and discussed serious problems, national and international. He said that the PIT will continue to study these and other problems and that their actions will be based on Senegalese realities. The PIT, he added, do not think that they are necessarily the best thinkers and the Party is ready to participate in similar discussions, but some forces are deliberately excluding the communists. He pointed out that capitalism has no solutions to the catastrophic crisis confronting Africa, and asked why Senegal does not take the initiative to improve trade and other relations with the Soviet Union, especially since the latter is calling for mutually beneficial relations with all countries.

This historic seminar organised by the PIT is a sign, however tiny, that many forces in Africa now recognise that they have to work together with communists. That communists in Africa are not "foreign" but the flesh and blood of the oppressed and exploited masses of our continent.

Death of Comrade Seydou Sissoko

On 10 March 1986 comrade Seydou Sissoko, chairman of the Party of Independence and Labour of Senegal (PIT), died in Moscow, at the age of 57. An active communist for over 30 years he had dedicated his life and work to the struggle for national liberation and socialism. Sissoko was in the forefront of the struggle against French colonialism and after independence against neo-colonialism and subservience to imperialism. For 15 years — July 1960 to July 1975 — he worked in the underground inside the country. Though continuously hunted he was never arrested. More than any other communist Sissoko was responsible for keeping intact the illegal structures of the Party and for its consolidation and growth.

Comrade Sissoko was a kind, modest, gentle, warm person with a lively sense of humour. But he was uncompromising in his opposition to colonialism, racism, imperialism and capitalism. A true internationalist, an impeccable foe of anti-Sovietism, he fought for the unity of the world communist movement in general and of the communist movement in Africa in particular. He played an active role in ensuring the success of the first conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Tropical and Southern Africa.

Whilst working in the underground he became seriously ill with tubercolosis and lost the use of one lung. During this period he was elected general secretary and continued to devote all his time and energy to Party activities. In 1975 he was eventually persuaded to go to Moscow for treatment. He was a model patient, always courteous and undemanding.

When the PIT regained its legality in 1981 he returned home to guide the Party through this most difficult transition phase. At the last Congress in September 1984 Amath Dansoko was elected general secretary and Sissoko chairman — a position specially created for him.

Comrade Sissoko had gone to Moscow to attend the 27th Congress of the CPSU. Here his health deteriorated, but he insisted on following the proceedings, promising to enter hospital as soon as the Congress had ended. But during this period he fell into a coma and died soon afterwards.

He was given a hero's funeral in Senegal. His stature was such that the funeral was attended by all the major political parties including the ruling Socialist Party. The communist movement in Africa has lost a patriot and internationalist, staunch freedom fighter for peace and socialism. We South African communists dip our red banner in honour of this outstanding comrade.

Saharan People Fight For Independence

It is now over ten years since the majority of the Western Saharan people established the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) in order to exercise their right as a nation, independent and sovereign. SADR is two thirds under occupation by colonialist Morocco with aid from US imperialism. The majority of its population, estimated to be some 750,000 people, have been forced to live in refugee camps in neighbouring Algeria.

Growing international support and solidarity have led some 63 non-aligned countries including India, Yugoslavia, Cuba, Vietnam, Angola, Ethiopia and Nicaragua to recognize SADR. This has further strengthened the Saharawi people's determination to drive back the Moroccan colonialists from SADR. The 19th OAU summit peace plan contained in resolution 104 has yet to be implemented by Morocco.

Instead Morocco has embarked on an onslaught against the Saharawi people, its army equipped with the most modern and sophisticated weaponry and trained by the US and France.

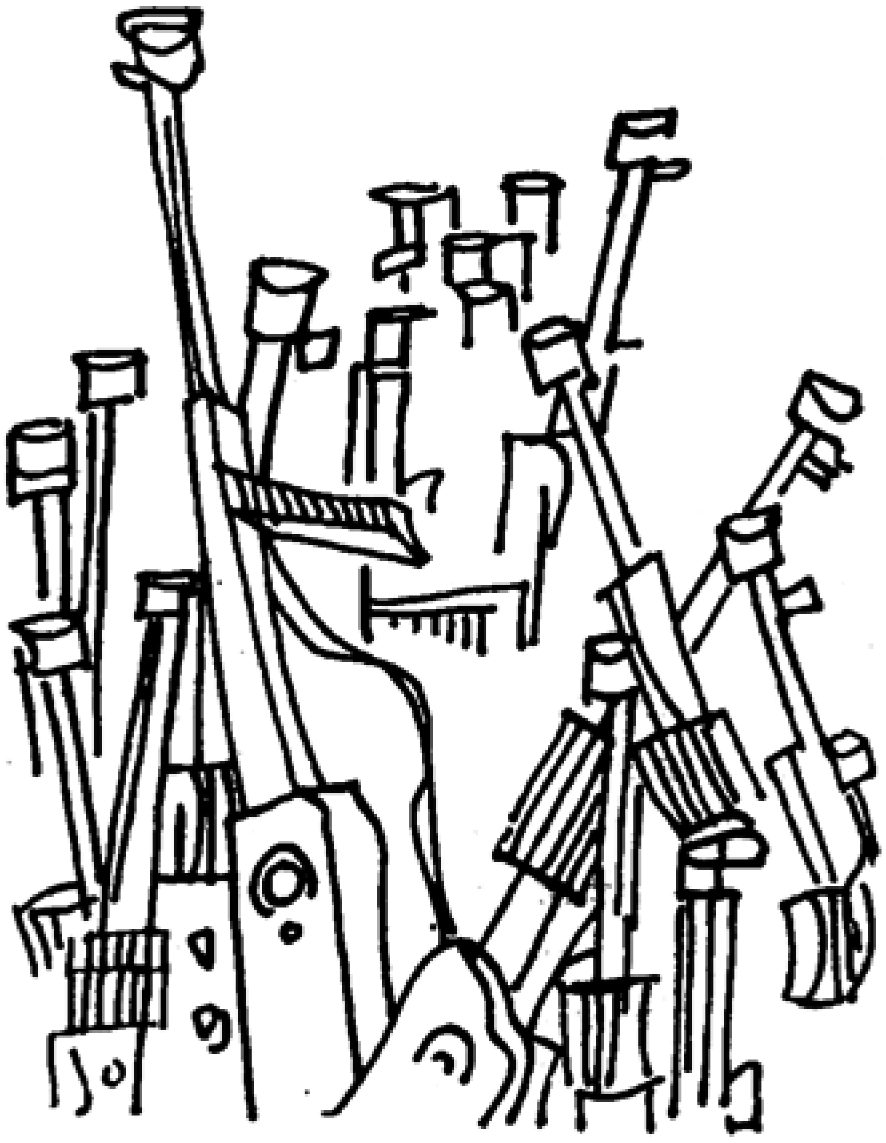
Ever since the 1975 Tripartite Agreement of Madrid between Spain, Morocco and Mauritania, reached under the guidance of the deputy CIA chief Vernon Walters, the US has become deeply involved in the region. US commitment to supply the Moroccan military budget has increased to over $300 million, in order to maintain "the stability of a pro-western country" which has played a "moderating" role in the Arab world vis-a-vis Israel and since 1982 has "agreed to access and transit rights in certain contingencies to assist the deployment of US forces to South-West Asia" (words of the Reagan administration in the official budget request to Congress). In other words, facilities are available at Moroccan airfields for the US Rapid Deployment Force.

Under the impetus of US imperialism Morocco claimed before leaving the OAU in 1984 that the conflict is a regional one — meaning a conflict with Algeria. It wants to create a pretext to carry out the policy of "hot pursuit" into the neighbouring countries in order to suppress Saharawi resistance. This can "seriously threaten the peace, security and stability in the whole region" as stated by foreign ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement during the September 1985 conference in Luanda.

It is estimated that the colonialist policy is costing Morocco $1bn per year, bringing the total foreign debt to some $13bn. IMF demands have led to severe austerity measures for the masses. King Hassan II has responded with repressive measures to the growing opposition of the people to the IMF demands. In order to counter the low morale among the army caused by the successful attacks of SPLA — the military wing of Polisario — Morocco has extended the defence wall further south into the territory previously occupied by Mauretania. The wall is some 1000 miles long, consisting of sandbanks, trenches, artillery bunkers, underground quarters for troops, observation posts aided with electronic detection and sophisticated radar equipment. The semi-conventional army of the SPLA with a great deal of guerilla warfare experience keeps the Moroccans in check.

The battlefield successes of SPLA, coupled with international solidarity, have confirmed the Saharawi people in their determination to secure victory over Morocco and the return of their homeland.

While living in difficult conditions in refugee camps the Saharawi people have continued to work for an end to deprivation, illiteracy and disease. Socio-political and cultural development within the democratic national institutions has produced an outstanding result, uniting all social strata behind the slogan "All the homeland or martyrdom".



THE EFFECTS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMIC CRISIS ON THE WORKERS

by T.B. Fulani

Last year the Rand tumbled to about 35 Cents to a US Dollar, the Johannesburg Stock Exchange had to close for three days, the Pretoria regime proposed the rescheduling of its debt repayment. A representative of a Swiss Bank called for significant political reforms.

Political pressure against the apartheid regime is making foreign investors think twice before dealing on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. As the liberation struggle gathers momentum and profits fail to take an upward turn, more and more foregin investors will withdraw and more firms will close down. A number of them are already winding up and returning to their countries of origin.

The economic sanctions and disinvestment campaigns are fast gaining momentum. In response Pretoria has threatened to cut supplies of strategic minerals to Western countries. Botha also threatens to withdraw 1,5 million workers from neighbouring African states. These tactics are intended as a decoy to avert sanctions.

The United Democratic Front in alliance with the democratic trade unions, the National Union of Mine Workers (NUM) in particular, launched a counter offensive by proposing to withdraw black buying power from all mining cities and towns, if Pretoria implements its threats. This reaction from the mass democratic movement and the workers knocked some sense into the minds of Botha and his clique.

The workers' muscle is yet to be felt with the emergence of the 500,000 strong Congress of South African Trade Unions, COSATU. The coming into existence of COSATU poses a threat not only to the employers, but to the entire apartheid state machinery. "We are going to give a lead" said the President of the new Federation, Elijah Barayi, at the inaugural conference. He further stated that COSATU would demand that a future black Government nationalise the mines and other major industries. COSATU has also pledged its full support for the disinvestment campaign and its commitment to take an active part politically, socially and culturally.

The working class as the most exploited and the most numerous should necessarily constitute the mass base of every democratic organisation. The participation of the trade unions in the broad democratic struggle will deepen and extend the political consciousness of the workers and their role in the revolution. Distancing the trade unions from the mass democratic struggle hinders the political development of the workers.

The democratic principles as espoused by the leadership of COSATU are in line with the revolutionary fighting mood of our people.

It is only the working class in alliance with other democratic forces that can ensure the destruction of apartheid. It is the duty of the trade unions to take advantage of the present crisis and the workers' anger and rouse the people to inflict the final death blow on the Botha regime.

Causes of the economic crisis

The current economic crisis in South Africa cannot be seen in isolation from the global capitalist crisis. The past 15 years have experienced a major slow down of economic activity in the capitalist world with growth rates falling by half in some countries, profits declining and unemployment returning to the level of the 1930's.

The economic crisis is inextricably bound up with the rising tide of popular resistance. The people have consistently refused to succumb to Pretoria's manoeuvres. They shout the slogan in unison "apartheid cannot be reformed, it must be destroyed"! Indications are that the balance of forces is tilting in favour of liberation. Examining a similar situation in Tzarist Russia in 1915, V.I. Lenin, a great tactician, pointed out that

> "For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for the 'lower classes not to want' to live in the old way, it is also necessary that the 'upper classes should be unable' to live in the old way".[1]

As the struggle gains momentum, the South African capitalist class fears that their business might go up in flames, especially the multinational cooperations.

Already, more than 30 US Corporations have moved out of South Africa since 1980. Some multinational corporations have begun to sell their shares in South African subsidiaries to South African firms, whilst those who pulled out do so for a variety of reasons such as political instability, anti-apartheid pressure at home, pressure by shareholders and in some countries pressure from Governments. It could also be said that one of the reasons for the withdrawal of these companies from South Africa is the shrinkage of the markets for South African products internationally.

Political factors have exacerbated the economic crisis and have made it difficult if not impossible for Pretoria to extricate itself from the mess. The abominable system of apartheid can only be defended by its architects and those who benefit directly or indirectly from it.

The corporations who believe that the current situation is a passing phase have responded to it in three central ways: by introducing *new technology*, especially micro-electronics; by relocating production to cheap labour areas; and by attempting new methods of labour control on the shop floor.[2]

The liberal employers point out that the current crisis is due to segregationist policies. Hence the pressure for the repeal of all discriminatory labour laws which hinder the development of the economy.

There are also moves to train blacks in technical skills and to remove such restrictions as those contained in the Physical Planning Act. Whilst such training is welcome, it is safe to say, blacks will continue to suffer discrimination in terms of promotion and rates of pay. The regime on the other hand has shifted its policy. Instead of seeking revenue from the better off, it has imposed taxes which hit the poor hardest.[3]

Influx Control

Two South Africa professors, Herman Giliomee and Lawrence Schlemmer, in discussing influx control, argue that the increase of blacks in the cities would not alter the character of the white cities[4]. The issue is not whether the character of the so-called white cities would change if influx control were removed, but whether blacks have the right to land.

The liberation movement is more concerned with the pressing need to give blacks more land by doing away with racial restrictions on the allocation and ownership of land. The scrapping of the racist land laws would reduce the existing feud between rival tribes and clans within the bantustans who are fighting over a dry bone.

The Freedom Charter says "restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land re-divided among those who work it, to banish famine and land hunger"[5]

The existing position in South Africa will not stabilise unless there is a fundamental change in the system of land tenure.

The recent decision by Pretoria to allow blacks to buy land in the urban areas without regard to Section 10 rights does not alter the position of blacks in the country. It is irrational to expect the 26 million black population to be crammed into 13% of the land whilst 5 million whites enjoy the benefit of 87% of the land. Blacks want an equitable distribution of the land among those who work it and a complete repeal of the obnoxious 1913 Land Act.

Unemployment and its effects

The South African manufacturing industry employs 1,465,000 workers while 1,306,000 are employed in agriculture.[6]

In 1974, foreign workers in South Africa stood at a total of 763,675, of whom 231,666 and 227,619 were from Malawi and Mozambique respectively. By 1981 this figure had dropped to 301,758, of whom 30,602 were Malawians and 59,391 were Mozambicans.

In the mines, the proportion of foreign workers fell from 80% in 1973 to 40% in 1979. These foreign workers were replaced by 'local workers' from the bantustans. Yet the situation in the bantustans remains bad. The recent Swart Commission on the Ciskei estimated that unemployment in the Ciskei is now about 50%.

In parts of Bophutatswana and Lebowa, KwaZulu and Gazankulu at least 50% of the potential economically active population is unemployed. More than 100,000 jobs were lost in manufacturing industries hit by the recession as the fall in consumer spending forced a slow down in production. The Steel and Engineering Industry (SEIFSA) laid off about 80,000 workers, the combined work force dropped to 374,000 from the 1981 peak of 454,000. The motor and component industry lost about 50,000 jobs during the past five years. The May 1985 figure of workers employed in the mining and quarrying industries was 708,085, a decline of 0.3% when compared with the same period in 1984. Employment increased by 1.2% in the gold mines during the first five months of 1985 whilst employment in other mining industries increased by 9.6%.[7]

The economic slump is also hitting small business enterprises, some of which are being swallowed by big monopolies.

As a result of the high rate of unemployment, high interest rates and lengthened periods of debt payment, fewer companies are at present being registered and liquidations are rising at an alarming rate. During the first three months of 1985, 828 companies were liquidated i.e. 11% more than in the same period the previous year. Of the total, 437 were compulsory liquidations and 391 voluntary liquidations. The direct effect of these liquidations is that workers are sacked and in many cases "deported" to the bantustans. "Deportation" to a bantustan means more misery to the families. Research undertaken in Bophutatswana in 1983 revealed that people hoping to find work outside the bantustans often had to pay their tribal authority about R30-R40 to get a work seeker's permit which itself is no guarantee of employment. Women seeking work are often obliged to have sex with clerks at bureaux and the company personnel officer. As a result of all these anomalies in the South African economic system, the rate of unemployment is increasing rapidly.

The official number of unemployed whites, Coloureds and Indians had risen to 67,903 by July 1985 — 131.4% higher than a year ago.[8] This figure, though conservative, is reported to be the highest on record for these groups. The number of Africans unemployed is put at 510,000 — 8.1% of the economically active population. If blacks in the bantustans were included, the figure would be more than 3 million unemployed in South Africa. It is common practice to keep the figure of unemployed low in order to give the impression that there is no crisis. The registered unemployed are only those job-seekers who report at the labour bureaux. If a worker does not report in any one month, which is common practice during the recession, he/she is not registered as being unemployed.

Wages

Official statistics reveal that in real terms remunerations paid to employees in the non-agricultural sectors rose by 3.7% in 1984, whilst the volume of production rose margianlly by 0.2% in the first quarter of 1985 compared to the previous quarter. When compared with the previous year, the volume of manufacturing production declined by 5.3% duriing the first quarter of 1985.[9]

Using these misleading figures, the employers are creating the impression that production is going down while wages are increasing. Considering the dramatic drop in value of the Rand and the ever increasing inflation rate it is hard to accept the validity of these figures in terms of buying power. However, even if there was an increase in real income, it is already off-set by the burden of family dependants who are victims of the economic crisis. Furthermore, such increases are as a result of bitter struggles waged by the workers.

Using this argument, the employers will demand from the workers

+ speeding up of production

+ a wage freeze during the recession

+ no "unfair" demands during the crisis period

+ retrenchment without regard to the principle of "last in, first out", militant trade unionists and elderly workers become the first victims.

Strikes and demands

The increase in the number of strikes during the past five years shows that in spite of the economic recession, the workers are prepared to risk their jobs for meaningful change.[6]

For a black worker to go on strike means not only risking his job but also losing his home in the city and being forced into a bantustan.

With the sharp increase in the cost of living, General Sales Tax, growing unemployment and retrenchments, increased victimisation and the repression of trade unionists and workers, the number of strikes also increases proportionately. There are a variety of reasons for the number of strikes that have taken place in the past few years, they range from economic to political demands as follows:

a) Since 1979, workers have been demanding the right to form trade unions of their choice.

b) They rejected all government created institutions such as Community Councils and the President's Council.

c) They fought against the introduction of a new income tax system for blacks in 1984.

d) They fought against low wages, retrenchments and victimisation of workers.

e) They demand the withdrawal of the racist troops from the black townships.

f) They organised a boycott of white owned shops and factories.

The strike weapon was invoked by the trade unions in conjunction with community organisations and the UDF in the face of the Pretoria regime's refusal to grant the Africans full social, economic and political rights.

The first major consumer boycott action took place in the Eastern Cape city of Port Elizabeth on 15 July 1985 at a time when political agitation against the racist regime was spreading to the cities of East London, Cape

Town, Johannesburg, Pietermaritzburg, Durban and some country towns and districts. The organisers of the consumer boycott called for the immediate lifting of the state of emergency, the withdrawal of the SAP and the army personnel from black townships, the release of all political detainees, and granting of full political rights to all people in a united democratic and non-racial South Africa, the dismantling of the bantustans and the recognition of democratically elected students' representative councils (SRC's). The consumer boycott has been directed at white owned shops and businesses because whites possess the vote and power to compel the regime to abolish apartheid.

Reaction of the regime

The boycott caused an overall drop of about 60% in the trade of white business firms in Port Elizabeth as well as more retrenchments of staff by small-scale traders.

In East London, the largest target of the boycott, small traders retrenched a total of 250 workers and the regime granted permission to cut staff wages by introducing a shorter working week.

In Queenstown retailers have been given a go ahead to cut employees' wages and hours up to 80%.

The hardened attitude of the employers to the stay away is clearly reflected in the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Commerce. The employers adopted the following conditions:

— no show, no pay;
— clock time only would be paid for;
— no overtime to be worked at the request of employees;
— holiday pay would be computed on the number of shifts actually worked.

The survival of the South African ruling class depends on the use of force and the creation of a stable black middle class to serve as a buffer between the oppressor and the oppressed.

The regime in its ploy to create a core of permanently urbanised Africans to act as a stabilising force, has relaxed certain conditions of black tenure contained in the Cooperation and Development Bill.

The Bill, if passed, will mean that workers are relatively free to move from one prescribed area to another (either with one employer or from one to another) without losing time accumulated towards the 10 to 15 year entitlement. If a black worker, after five years of service with one employer, faces lay-off at a particular plant, he may at the discretion of the employer be transferred to another in an entirely different area of the country. After a further five years he qualifies for Section 10 (1) (b) rights.

On the other hand, the Urban Areas Act provides that a black may legally seek work in a prescribed area for a period of 72 hours, while the shortage of approved housing remains a thorny problem.

These manoeuvres by Pretoria are designed to neutralise the fighting spirit of the oppressed and exploited black population. But nothing short of the total eradication of all apartheid laws will satisfy the dispossessed.

Every new Bill or repeal of an old Act is always followed by more stringent control measures. In the face of all these repressive measures, the black trade unionists and workers have emerged with greater resilience. They are not only opposing every piece of legislation that Botha proposes, they are challenging the very foundation of the apartheid system.

The trade union movement together with its class allies are beginning to realise that national oppression in South Africa is the institutional framework within which class exploitation takes place. Without the eradication of this evil system of apartheid, it will be impossible for the working class to realise its ultimate objective. National liberation is the form which the struggle takes in our country.

The final responsibility for the destruction of apartheid does not rest with the Pretoria regime, it lies squarely on the mass of our people, the oppressed and exploited.

Footnotes

1. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works* Vol. 21 pp 213-14
2. S.A.L.B. Vol. 6, May 1985 p.3
3. *Rand Daily Mail* 28/02/84
4. *News Briefing,* No. 8 Vol. 9 p.11-12
5. ANC Speaks p.14
6. *Financial Mail* June 28/85, pp.51-2
7. *Economic Review of S.A.,* July-Sept 1985 p.43
8. *Economic Review of S.A.,* April-June 1985 p.39
9. ibid. p.39
10. *News Briefing,* Issue No. 11, Vol. 9 p.13
11. *News Briefing,* Issue No. 33, Vol. 9 p.19

COMMUNISTS AND THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

by Rosita

Since time immemorial the question of the role and status of women in society has been a topical issue. For centuries they were the most oppressed and exploited, and at all times the ideologists of the propertied classes strove to legalise and justify the subordinate and unequal status of woman in society. Aristotle taught that "we should look upon the female state as being as it were a deformity, though one which occurs in the ordinary course of nature."[1] Bourgeois ideologists who saw woman's role as only housemaker, bearer and rearer of children, tried to prove scientifically the so-called intellectual inferiority of women, their incapacity for independent creative thought. They held that the unequal social status of woman was due to her biological make-up.

Progressive thinkers of the past opposed these reactionary ideas, defended women's interests and underlined the importance of the emancipation of women. Among those are the French Enlighteners, the Socialist-Utopians, later Russian Revolutionary Democrats. Chernyshevsky, leader of the Russian Revolutionary Democrats, wrote:

> "Nature has given woman a trusty, strong and penetrating mind. But society does not benefit from this mind because it rejects it, crushes it, and stifles it. The history of mankind would advance ten times faster if that mind were not rejected and killed, but were active."

The shortcoming of the champions of women's rights at the time was that they were unable to fathom the social roots of women's inequality and therefore could not point out the way emancipation could be won. The founders of Marxism scientifically proved that the unequal position of women rested on socio-economic factors. In his Book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* Engels shows that women's enslavement came into existence with the appearance of private property and that her oppression is deeply rooted in this form of onwership which led to economic dependence on her husband or father, and to her class oppression and exploitation as a slave, serf or proletarian. A creation of private property, women's inequality and inferior status in society can only be abolished with the destruction of private property. In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* Marx and Engels wrote that only the abolition of private property can "... do away with the status of women as mere instruments of production."[2]

Women's Lib.

Lenin creatively developed the teachings of Marx and Engels on the women's question. He repeatedly stressed that the women's movement for emancipation and the general struggle of the working class for liberation had the same objectives, that the woman worker and the peasant woman had no special aims and interests other than the class aims and interests of the proletariat as a whole. Thus he severely criticised those bourgeois women's organisations which diverted women from the class struggle and misled them on to the false path of struggle between the sexes. As he pointed out, "the most important step is the abolition of private ownership of land and the factories. This and this alone opens up the way towards the complete and actual emancipation of woman."[3]

Thus he consistently emphasised the need for working women to take an active part in the struggle of the proletariat. He developed the thesis of Marx who wrote "Anybody who knows anything of history knows that great social changes are impossible without the feminine ferment"[4]. Lenin later formulated the basic thesis that "there can be no Socialist Revolution unless very many working women take a big part in it" and that "the success of a revolution depends on how much the women take part in it."[5]

The South African Communist Party has correctly applied the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin to the specific conditions of struggle in South Africa. It closely links the cause of women's emancipation with the revolution of national liberation and the liberation of the working class. The Party sees the winning of national liberation of the entire black people as an absolute condition for any change in the social status of women as a whole.

Women constitute more than 50% of the population. Black women are the most oppressed and exploited — the slaves of slaves. Lenin said under capitalism the working woman bears the burden of dual oppression — as a member of the working class and as a woman. In our conditions where national oppression, racial discrimination and class exploitation have been blended into a single diabolical mechanism for the extraction of astronomical profits from the black people, black women — in particular African women — suffer a triple oppression. They are oppressed and exploited as memberss of an oppressed people, as members of the working class and as women. The three dimensions of this oppression are inextricably linked. They cannot be mechanically separated, for black women are not oppressed in some separate ways as workers, and in other isolated ways as women.

Black women are stripped of those things which are considered basic throughout the world: the right to live with their husbands, to bring up and care for their own children and to lead a normal family life. Instead they are regarded as 'superfluous appendages' and 'perpetual minors', denied an existence as human beings with abilities, aspirations and needs of their own.

Party Experience

In working out proper ways and means of organising women for revolutionary work, the SACP based itself on the rich experience of tested Marxist-Leninist Parties in this field. Shortly after its founding in 1921 and in response to a circular from the Executive Committee of the Comintern in 1922, the national parties put all their energy and efforts into enlisting and working out a more systematic training of women, inasmuch as "the conquest of power by the proletariat ... can be realised only with the active participation of the wide masses of the proletarian and semi-proletarian women."[6] The Party embarked on a campaign to recruit women into the Party. It was a slow and difficult process. Only in the late 20's and early 30's did the Party's work become evident. During this period outstanding leaders like Ray Alexander, Molly Wolton, Rebecca Bunting, Josie Palmer (Mpama) rose to the top. The "CPSA did take a lead in expanding the scope of political work to include women". "Its role in establishing the women's movement within the national liberation movement was a pioneering one, and it set its imprint on that movement from an early date.[7] the Party papers *International* and *Umsebenzi* did much to promote the political awareness of black women. Later the *Guardian* featured a "Woman's Page" to focus on the problems of women.

In a discussion with Clara Zetkin, the noted German revolutionary, Lenin said:

> "We must not close our eyes to the fact that the Party must have bodies, working groups, commissions, bureaus or whatever you like, whose particular duty it is to arouse the masses of women workers, to bring them into contact with the Party, and to keep them under its influence... We need appropriate bodies to carry out work amongst them, special methods of agitation and forms of organisation. That is not feminism, that is practical revolutionary expediency."[8]

Thus in February 1931 the Communist Party founded a Women's Department to organise women as women, to draw into active struggle the proletarian woman in the factories, the peasant woman and also the wife of the petty owner. During this period the Party called for a Women's National Conference with the aim "to unify and consolidate the sectional struggle of women ... and in order to bring into existence a permanent organisation of struggle for the working women of South Africa"[9] From the pages of its newspapers and leaflets, from the rostrums of its congresses, the Party time and again stressed the need to draw more and more working women into the revolutionary struggle.One such appeal read:

> "Toiling native women, white working women, realise your interests, wake up to fight for better conditions side by side with your husbands, fathers and brothers. Only by a United Front can you get rid of all the exploitation which you suffer under capitalism and where you as women are the greatest sufferers".[10]

While conducting large-scale political work among working women to draw them into the revolutionary struggle, the Party took constant care to train a hard core of professional women communists. Communists such as Ray Alexander, Dora Tamana, Josie Palmer, Rahima Ally, Betty Radford, Hilda Bernstein, Betty du Toit, became leaders of the women's community and trade union movements. They spearheaded the Party's political and ideological education in the women's movement, and in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. Thus it came as no surprise that after the formation of the Federation of South African Women (FSAW) this organisation became an affiliate member of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF). Speaking about such women Lenin said "we have every right to be proud that the flower of revolutionary womanhood is to be found in our Party."[11] And Cheryl Walker writes that the role of CPSA women in nurturing and spreading ideas of political organisation among women was a particularly large one... "They were thus performing a major task in preparing the ground for the subsequent establishment of a national women's organisation within the liberation movement."[12]

As part of its organisational and educational work among women the Party also sponsored delegations of prominent women workers to the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. These visits opened the eyes of the women to equality in fact, exposed them to new experiences and deepened their political understanding. The period between the 1930's and 1950's was marked by numerous militant campaigns undertaken by women and led by the Party i.e. against the acute housing problem, inflation, war, food shortages and passes.

Illegal Period

In 1950 the Party was declared unlawful by the ruling Nationalist Party. This ushered in a new phase in the life of the Party. In 1953, having regrouped its forces and strengthened its ranks, the SACP embarked with increased vigour on the task of work among women. The new direction was to organise the working women into trade unions. This period saw the rapid inflow of African women in industry, especially manufacturing industry. As their numbers in industry grew, so did they become more prominent in the trade union movement at both the leadership and general membership level.

Together with the newly founded FSAW and the Women's Section of the ANC, members of the SACP worked hard to make the women a strong detachment of the revolutionary movement. They took part in the famous defiance campaign against Unjust Laws, the boycott against municipal beer-halls, the fight on the labour front etc. In September 1959 when the ANC convened a special conference, a bright red banner proclaimed — "WE THANK OUR WOMEN". Indeed the pioneering work undertaken by the Party in organising and uplifting the political consciousness of women had borne bountiful fruit. Commenting on the actions of women at the time, comrade Moses Mabhida, General Secretary of the SACP, said:

> "It was one of the most powerful demonstrations. Unfortunately for our people, we didn't realise the extent of the organisation of our people, which was at that time very high, and the women formed a very powerful nucleus for a powerful organisation. If I may say, if our people had taken it further, it might have taken the same trend as it did in Iran — maybe not exactly the same, but the extent of organisation and the militancy of the people was almost the same"[13]

The militant actions of women of all races were highly appraised by all forces in the country. In a letter to the women's Federation, SACTU wrote.

> "It is the women of South Africa who have demonstrated to all progressive forces the true meaning of militancy and organisation and we in the trade union movement are determined to follow your courageous example."[14]

In the 1960's when the apartheid regime unleashed a reign of terror in the country, banning democratic organisations, women were among the first to show their readiness to take up arms against the apartheid state. This was due to a large extent to the consistent educational work done by the Party and

ANC. A prominent woman member of the liberation movement asked: "How long shall we go on with these demonstrations which are one-sided in the sense that the police attack our people and in all ways we ask them not to retaliate?"[15] This enraged mother so clearly displayed what Lenin predicted in 1916. He wrote in *The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution*

> "that women and teenage children fought in the Paris Commune side by side with the men. It will be no different in the coming battles for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. Proletarian women will not look on passively as poorly armed or unarmed workers are shot down by the well armed forces of the bourgeoisie. They will take to arms as they did in 1871.[16]

The Party has always drawn on this thesis by Lenin. In its educational work it continues to stress to women that their place is at the fighting side of their husbands, fathers and sons. The decision on armed struggle in 1961 posed yet another challenge to the Party — to organise women to participate actively in the armed struggle for the overthrow of the racist minority regime. It also impressed on women that as the educators of new generations they have to teach the youth about the militant and revolutionary traditions of the oppressed people. This role was stressed by Lenin when he said:

> "Women will say to their sons: You will soon be grown up. You will be given a gun. Take it and learn the military art properly. The proletarians need this knowledge."[17]

It is no exaggeration to say that South African women have excelled in the fulfilment of this task. They have kept alive and kindled in the hearts of the young the spirit of revolt and resistance. Indeed they are the firm rock of strength which continues to inspire tens of thousands of young men and women to ever greater militancy.

More To Be Done

At present inside the country, when the revolutionary situation is developing apace, when the flames of revolution are licking the skies, the influence of the Party should and must be felt as never before. We need to evolve new ways and means of organising this powerful force into the potent fist that it is. The Party Programme and its demands for women must be made available to the mass of the women. We call to mind the late Yusuf Dadoo's message from his deathbed. He asked: "To what extent have we taken our policy and programme to the masses? To what extent has it become understood by the people as their own policy?"

Despite the enormous amount of work done by the Party and liberation movement among certain sections of the women, still large numbers of women remain unorganised. Women in the Bantustans, who are the worst victims of oppression and exploitation, have not been sufficiently organised. The grievances of these women are numerous. Thus the correct slogans, appeals, and methods of work among this section have to be worked out. Sustained propaganda has to be undertaken to popularise the views of the party on the emancipition of women and to revive the necessary women's departments, commissions or bureaus for Party work among women. Let us pay heed to Lenin's advice. "There is no doubt that we have far more organising talent among the working and peasant women than we are aware of, that we have far more people than we know of who can organise practical work."[18]

References:
1. *Not In God's Image,* by J.O'Faolian and L. Martino, New York, 1973 p.39.
2. Marx and Engels, *Selected Works* Vol 1 p.124.
3. V.I. Lenin, *Coll. Works.* Vol. 28 pp.180-181.
4. Marx's letter to Kugelmann in the USA, Dec. 12 1868.
5. V.I. Lenin *op.cit.*
6. Theses and resolutions adopted at the 3rd Congress of the Comintern, Moscow 1921 pp. 16-17.
7. *Women and Resistance in South Africa,* by Cheryl Walker p.48.
8. *My Recollections of Lenin,* by Clara Zetkin pp.69-70.
9. Cheryl Walker *op.cit.* p.51.
10. Ibid. p.55
11. Clara Zetkin *op.cit.* p.68.
12. Cheryl Walker *op.cit.* p.99.
13. Organise or Starve. p. 306.
14. Ibid. p.306.
15. Ibid. p.306.
16. V.I. Lenin *Selected Works* Vol I p.744.
17. Ibid. p.745.
18. V.I. Lenin Collected Works Vol. 29 p.430.

BOOK REVIEWS

SYMBOLS OF RESISTANCE TO APARTHEID REPRESSION

Nelson Mandela, by Mary Benson. (Penguin Books. Price £2.50.)
Part of My Soul, by Winnie Mandela, edited by Anne Benjamin and adapted by Mary Benson. (Penguin Books. Price £2.95.)

The persecution to which Nelson and Winnie Mandela have been subjected by the racist South African regime has come to symbolise the oppression inflicted on the entire black population by the apartheid laws. It is as a representative of the majority of the South African people fighting for freedom that Nelson Mandela has been honoured throughout the world as well as by the people of his own country. And it is not only as Nelson Mandela's wife but as a political figure in her own right that Winnie Mandela has similarly come to occupy a unique position in the pantheon of South African freedom fighters.

The amazing courage and dignity with which Nelson and Winnie Mandela have faced their persecutors reflect not only their outstanding personal qualities but also their consciousness of the responsibility they bear as representatives of the people. And in turn it is the unity of the people in the liberation struggle that gives the Mandelas their strength and makes them invulnerable to the enemy's attack.

In *Part of My Soul* Winnie Mandela shows she is fully conscious of her role as people's delegate:

> "I have ceased a long time ago to exist as an individual. The ideals, the political goals that I stand for, those are the ideals and goals of the people in this country. They cannot just forget their own ideals. My private self doesn't exist. Whatever they do to me, they do to the people of this country".

And in his address to the court during his first trial in 1962, Nelson Mandela deprecated the attempts of the media to build the cult of his personality:

> "It has been suggested that the advances, the articulateness of our people, the successes which they are achieving here, and the recognition which they are winning both here and abroad are in some way the result of my work. I must place on record my belief that I have been only one in a large army of people, to all of whom the credit for any success of achievement is due".

Nevertheless, despite their pleas, buildings, squares, streets, scholarships etc. throughout the world are being granted the accolade of the Mandela name, and public interest in the Mandela family is intense. The two books under review will do a great deal to inform readers (one hopes in South Africa as well as abroad) of the enormous contribution made to the liberation struggle by Nelson and Winnie Mandela. One can only hope that in time the work of their comrades — Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Wilton Mkwayi and the many, many others of comparable stature in the liberation movement — will be equally well chronicled.

The two books are dissimilar in structure. *Part Of My Soul* is neither autobiography nor biography, but the gist of a series of tape-recorded interviews with Winnie Mandela plus iterviews with her children and a number of colleagues and friends. However, despite the diversity of sources, the essence of Winnie Mandela's character and personality shines through. The interviews with her range over the whole of her life from childhood to exile in Brandfort and explain logically her development from naive young girl to determined people's leader.

Mary Benson's biography of Nelson Mandela follows more traditional lines. Based on interviews with Nelson Mandela before he was imprisoned, on information gleaned from his family and comrades, on his writings and letters, court records and other published material, it brings together most of the relevant detail of his life mixed in with the history of the liberation movement.

Where the book falls short, however, is in its politics. The nature of the relationship between the Communist Party and the ANC, and in particular the Communist Party's approach to the national question, is imperfectly conceived or expressed. In so far as this throws light on Mandela's own political position, a deeper analysis of the relationship between race and class struggle in South Africa would not have been out of place.

One cannot end a review of these two books without referring to the extraordinary personal relationship between Nelson and Winnie Mandela which has not merely survived the years of separation but been deepened and in a sense transformed by them, as the infinitely touching exchange of letters between them testifies.

It is to be hoped that the publication of these two books will lead to an intensification of the worldwide campaign demanding the immediate release of Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners suffering beyond all measure because of their opposition to the evil system of apartheid.

Z.N.

LIBERATION AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

A Certain Sound — The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa, by Cedric Mayson. (Epworth Press 1985. 145 pp. Price £4.95)

The title of the book is clarified on p 132: the "certain sound" is the trumpet of the "kingdom of God". This is a book about the profound religious conviction of its author, and how this conviction affected him when he emigrated from the United Kingdom to South Africa. Cedric Mayson takes great pains to demonstrate why not only apartheid, but also capitalism's private profit motive, are contrary to biblical teachings. He finds many parallels between the "kingdon of God" and socialism, which have in common the sharing of the nation's wealth more equitably and doing away with the exploitation of one man to the advantage (profit) of another, for instance.

Because of the heavy focus on the bible as the main justification for abandoning both apartheid and capitalism, this book may not convince all readers. But clearly Cedric Mayson's faith helped him deal with many difficult situations in his life, including arrest and interrogation at the hands of the security police, including breaking the law on many occasions to assist anti-apartheid activists, and including the untimely death of his son.

The book appears to be directed at those who are not convinced that apartheid is evil. In parts the author directs his arguments at the whites living in South Africa, in others he attacks the international community in the West for the two-faced policy of verbal condemnation and very little action.

While suggesting that belief in the bible must lead to abhorrence of apartheid, Mayson strongly criticises Christians and their churches, both in South Africa and in the West, for failing to make the connection. Churches have become empty because of their failure to address everyday issues, many of which are political issues. He is opposed to the oft-quoted Christian position (p24): "If we can only teach people to love God and to love their neighbour then everything else will come right." Rather, direct involvement in all the major issues of the day is a 'must' for a committed Christian. Of course, he has praise for those activists in the churches, such as those who worked in the Christian Institute while it still functioned.

This reviewer felt that the author spent too much time trying to persuade his readers that apartheid is sinful. Many of the points were made several times over in different parts of the book. Perhaps this is necessary if the audience is of the "Christian nationalism" breed. Nonetheless the political message comes through clearly. In Chapter 4 Mayson debunks the "western civilization is best" approach, pointing out that trade, culture and government structures existed in Africa long before the western European countries plundered the continent for their own benefit, in the name of "civilization" and in the name of god. He points out that the racial aspect of apartheid must not be confused with the underlying economic and political causes, and that some blacks (e.g. bantustan leaders and their supporters) have sold out and are benefitting from apartheid, as well as most whites.

In the final chapter the clear accusation is made (p 137: "Apartheid is not a blot on western civilization but the heart of it ... Apartheid is a heresy which must be destroyed (rather than a sin which can be forgiven)." We should not be surprised at the Western countries' lack of support for the liberation movement; they will not support us until they themselves are liberated from capitalism and its accompanying greed.

The first chapter of the book consists of a series of snippets of Mayson's personal involvement and commitment, and I was hoping that there would be more of this, because the most dynamic and inspiring parts of the book were exactly those sections which dealt with those personal experiences (such as his life in the Transkei). Mayson indicates that he will probably not write about these aspects again. This is a pity, as the philosophical/religious aspects of the book were not, for me, as alive as his involvement with the people of South Africa in "the struggle for liberation in southern Africa," the book's subtitle.

P.S.

NO HOSANNA FOR HOSEA

A History of Africa — by Hosea Jaffe (Zed Press, London, 1985. HB £14.95, PB £5.95)

Despite its title, this book is not a history of Africa, but an analysis of over 2000 (and espcially the last 200) years of African history and of relations between Africa and Europe. It is not an easy book to read. Its style is pompous and full of jargon, and its frequent use of long, contorted sentences extremely annoying. The author seems at times more intent on displaying his encyclopaedic knowledge than in making his points succinctly, as the following sentence (p30) about feudal Ethiopia illustrates:

> This tribal-feudal system, with its rock church monoliths at Lalibela, its Gondar architecture, its militarized landed aristocracy, its Amharic monarchy (from 1270 to 1974 only one Negus-emperor was not Amharic), its powerful Rasses (whose strong communal and even tribal surplus-producing base made them look more like Japanese medieval 'Daimoys' than West European feudal barons or even Kiev boyars, who exploited both serfs and obschina village communities) its oppression of Galla, Sidoma, Tigre, Somali and other tribes (as the Samurai and Shoguns oppressed and marginalized the Ainu tribes) and the policy-making land-holding Coptic Church, existed properly in the non-desert highland valleys.

This book is not without its positive aspects. Among other things, it makes the point that racism grew out of capitalist colonialism; it shows that resistance to colonization was sustained and continent-wide despite some examples of collaboration with the conquerors; it exposes the ruthlessness and horror of imperialist conquest and rule, and shows how African peasants were forced to become wage workers through land dispossession, taxation, cattle culling and coercive labour recruitment.

Nonetheless, the book has serious flaws. The author uses the language of Marxism, but his is a distorted, often classless Marxism. While he sees and describes the sharp international contradictions between colonizers and colonized, he minimizes those within the imperialist countries. The entire proletariat of those countries, including the Communist parties, are seen as collaborators and willing allies of the imperialist bourgeoisie. He even claims that most of these workers are not exploited but share in the surplus-vlaue extracted from colonial or semi-colonial countries. He thus sees in them neither allies nor potential allies of the anti-imperialist movement in Africa.

The importance of the great anti-colonist movement which swept Africa in the post-war period is played down by Jaffe. While it is true, as he points out, that political independence was not accompanied by economic independence, this is no reason to downgrade its significance as an important step on the road to freedom. Neither is it correct to assume that those who led the movements for political independence were not interested in breaking completely free from imperialism. In this regard, the author, without any reference to back him up, makes the astonishing statement that "both Nyerere and Agostinho Neto have declared that they are part of the 'West'."(p133)

Some of Jaffe's worst historical distortions are reserved for our (and his) own country, South Africa, and particularly for the national liberation movement and the Communist Party. While he does acknowledge that the ANC is "still the major South African national liberation movement," (p111) he omits any mention of its decades of militant struggles — both non-violent and armed. Instead he emphasises what he calls its "British liberal-missionary European beginnings." When he talks about the contribution of ANC and CPSA members to the world-wide democratic struggle against fascism in World War Two, he refers to it disparagingly as "recruiting for Smuts" (p130). He also makes the slanderous allegation that the ANC meeting with Buthelezi's Inkatha in 1979 was arranged by the Pretoria regime together with the Thatcher government.

Jaffe's picture of the Communist Party, to which he devotes over three of his less than 150 pages, is utterly distorted. He portrays it as a party of "white communism" and claims that it was formed by "left Zionists and ISL leaders." He accuses the party of racism, pointing to its support of the 1922 white miners' strike and claiming falsely that "it was 50 years before the CPSA officially admitted its 1922 'error'." He completely ignores the long decades in which the party has been in the vanguard of the struggle against racism, a struggle during which many Communists, both black and white, suffered imprisonment, torture and even death.

The Party's ideology is labelled as "Stalinism" and a "rejection-in-practice of Leninism." Jaffe's hatred of the Communist Party is then matched by a breathtaking ignorance when he claims that it "was... logical for the 'European' elite governing the CPSA, after being outlawed... by the 1950 Suppression of Communism Act, to move towards the anti-USSR and social democratic stance of French, British, Spanish and Italian Eurocommunism" (pp 126-27). Not only is the "European elite governing the CPSA" a figment of his imagination, but the charge of being anti-USSR or Eurocommunist is absolute nonsense as any reader of this journal will know.

Revolutionary enlightenment, it appears, has been brought to South Africa only by the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) to which the author himself belonged. Jaffe even makes the outrageous claim that the NEUM's "political re-education" led to the Soweto uprising of 1976.

For an English grammar teacher who wants examples of complex sentences with lots of subordinate clauses, this book may be worth looking at. For anyone else, it is not really worth spending time or money on. The few valid points he makes are, in any case, better made elsewhere.

J.P.

THE FIGHT FOR CULTURAL LIBERATION

Theatre and Cultural Struggle in South Africa, by Robert Kavanagh. (London: Zed Books Ltd, 1985)

"No strategy for change in the pre-revolutionary period is complete without a theory and analysis of South African culture." (p.xiii) Robert Kavanagh sets out to make a contribution to such an analysis, concentrating his attention on theatre in urban South Africa. The book, based on a doctoral thesis, approaches the complex question of cultural struggle in the South African context from a Marxist perspective. The author's stated aims are to take the dynamic, dialectical relationship of class, race and nationality into account.

In his opening chapter Kavanagh refers to Gramsci in dealing with the relation of base to superstructure, the distinction between 'false consciousness' and class consciousness, and ruling class strategies in the realm of culture. He argues that South Africa's ruling class have resorted to 'rule' rather than 'hegemony' in the Gramscian sense. In other words naked coercion has been used much more than in western democracies. This does not mean that South Africa's white groups have not made complex and intensive use of cultural and ideological forms of domination.

During the early years of Nationalist rule, the Afrikaner's strategy for countering the English cultural influence among blacks was accomplished, Kavanagh argues, "not so much by attempting to legitimise their own ideology and culture, but by attempting to impose on them fossilized and adapted versions of African traditional ideology and culture." (p. 17)

The author looks at the history of struggle between Afrikaner nationalism and sections of capital for the exercise of cultural dominance. The ideology of English capital was in the main a form of paternalistic liberal multi-racialism. Kavanagh states that its apparent opposition to the Afrikaners facilitated its cultural hegemony. He cites the fact that English was widely adopted as a lingua franca. Much emphasis is placed on the relationship between English-speaking intellectuals and what is termed the 'black intermediate classes'. Here we see the author's attempt to balance the national and class questions beginning to meet with some difficulty. He argues that in the 1950's "English-speaking white intellectuals were able to relate to educated blacks because of a *natural affinity of class and culture..*" (my emphasis) (p.79). While an affinity did exist, it is somewhat overstated here, as elsewhere, in the author's attempt to underline the class factor.

Kavanagh is at pains to show that the Africans did by this stage possess a common historical culture in which there were inherent and developing heterogeneous elements. He writes that while white groups tended to promote ethnic divisions, African nationalists tended to stress the homogeneous elements. He makes no value judgements on the latter strategy in the context of South Africa's special type of colonialism. He adds that "only the Communist Party was in a position to take due cognisance of both class and nationality, and while pressing for a socialist South Africa, at the same time evolve the historic concept of the Black Republic" (p.32).

The main body of the book is devoted to detailed and effective studies of theatrical productions. Through these a process in black cultural action is discerned. Kavanagh shows how this process is affected by the struggle for cultural hegemony among the white groups and by the development of the proletariat and the alienation of black intellectuals from white liberalism. All four plays that he analyses are shown to function predominately in the objective interests of groups and classes other than the majority.

Fugard's 'No Good Friday' and the production of 'King Kong' are shown to have been linked to and clearly espouse the ideology of the dominant sections of the English-speaking white group. But Kavanagh finds elements in the structures of both which pointed forward to a more independent black theatre. No Good Friday's apparent independence from the establishment and its non-commercial character were to be taken up by the later more militant theatre of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM). King Kong's popular character (despite the nature of its production team) provided black playwrights with a model which, with modification, was acceptable to a black audience.

The ascendancy of Afrikaner cultural hegemony in the decade after these two productions gave rise to two new developments in black theatre. The author demonstrates the first by looking at the work of Gibson Kente and his commercial theatre. He argues that Kente's class interests "and even those of the (white) bourgeoisie proper to which they were related, were ultimately better served than those of the majority" (p.197) by his productions. But Kente's membership of the African national group (who also comprised his audiences) did result in a cultural authenticity and more radical function than Kente intended.

The second development in black cultural action is demonstrated through an analysis of the BCM production of 'Shanti'. Kavanagh is clear on the weaknesses of BC ideology and on the nature of its class basis but he argues that it did contribute to an evolution of a theory of cultural domination which moved in the direction of Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony.

In all his case studies the author pays special attention to the important question of language. He argues that the proletariat is developing languages "which tend towards the dissolution of ethnic barriers, which retain links with the rural class and which stretch out beyond national/cultural divisions to the urban proletariat of other black groups" (p.42). In this process he sees cultural elements which indicate a move towards the concept of 'majority'. It is on this concept of majority, of the proletariat and peasantry, that Kavanagh bases his theory on the way forward for black cultural action in South Africa.

In the conclusion of his study the author argues that only the proletariat and peasantry are able to produce the basis for a non-exploitative society and for a genuinely alternative theatre. On the question of what type of structures will produce that society we are told that this concerns the form of political organisation the majority needs to develop in order to effect revolutionary change. Kavanagh limits himself to the comment that "such structures will have to be based in the classes that make up the majority and no other." (p.198) This and other passages seem to suggest that such a political organisation does not yet exist. The reader is tempted to wonder whose interests the ANC represents if not the majority. And what about the SACP?

The author sometimes appears to be caught in a time warp. While it must be taken into account that he left South Africa in 1976 and finished the research on which the book is based before 1980, he does not seem to take cognisance of the great strides in both the political and cultural struggle of the past decade. He is still arguing for concepts like 'non-racial' to be acceptable in political parlance, something which has long been the case.

Kavanagh correctly links the efficacy of cultural struggle to the wider political organisations of the majority. He sees 'majority theatre' as "an agent in the formation of majority class consciousness." (p.209) Cultural cadres and leaders will, he argues, probably be drawn in large measure from the ranks of black intellectuals who have thrown in their lot with the majority. While based primarily in the working class and peasantry, majority theatre structures would also reach out to the allies of this group and also deal with the issue of woman's liberation.

The book does point the way for cultural workers and, indeed, their heightened activity in the struggle since his research was completed vindicates the main thrust of his work. While Kavanagh's book is recommended to cultural workers and other activists, it is necessary to point out some shortcomings. Kavanagh has tried hard to deal with the national and class tasks of our revolution. But such statements as "..it is not only a national struggle, it is also a class struggle and *is becoming increasingly more a class struggle and less a national one*" (p.200) (my emphasis) not only call for further elucidation but suggest that he has not fully grasped the dialectical relation between the two.

Ruth Nhere

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A HERO

In tribute to Nkululo Xhego Njongwe

by Mthetheleli

"Man's dearest possession is life. It is given to him but once, and he must live it so as to feel no torturing regrets for wasted years, never know the burning shame of a mean and petty past, so live that, dying, he might say: all my life, all my strength were given to the finest cause in all the world — the fight for the Liberation of Mankind."

These are the words of Ostrovsky in his book *How the Steel was Tempered.* These words fit well our dear comrade Nkululo Njongwe (known in the ranks of MK as Bryce Motsamai), who as a true soldier of Umkhonto we Sizwe died in his boots and refused to surrender to the ambush of the enemy despite the immense disparity in fire power and numbers. He and his dear comrade Eldridge Yakithi fought like wounded lions.

When the enemy was picking up their dead bodies it had also to take along its own dead. The comrades had given the enemy what it deserved. Nkululo Njongwe indeed lived his young and short life without any regrets, save that he cannot fight any longer. He had accomplished part of his desire; the remainder is left to us to complete, that is, the liberation of our Motherland.

I happened to read the death certificate of comrade Nkululo, a dear friend of mine. It states: NKULULO NJONGWE — CAUSE OF DEATH — MULTIPLE BULLET WOUNDS. If one reads the death certificate and sees photos of his bullet-riddled body, that is testimony enough of the ferociousness of the battle that ensued between the comrades and the enemy near East London.

I've known Nkululo for some time. We trained together, worked together and shared some joys together. What he would always harp on in our chats would be that, if they came for him, they would go back with their dead. He loved life, an optimist of incredible qualities.

He was a quiet man, very modest and if you hadn't seen him coming into your midst, you would take time to notice his presence. But whenever somebody would raise a controversial point, more especially one diametrically opposed to our policies and ideology, he would react in his cool but stinging response and would always say later: 'When wrong ideas start to creep, smash them unmercifully immediately'.

He was a fervent writer and a touching poet. He was a staunch contributor to *Dawn* as Joe Congo and other pen-names. He came from a Congress family. He trod right in the footsteps of his father — Dr. Njongwe, a leader of the Youth League in the Eastern Cape. He imbibed the spirit of no surrender from his family. He was fittingly buried next to his father at Qumbu in the Transkei.

In this, the Year of MK, 1986, Nkululo has ceased to be among the living, yet his memory is as vivid as sunlight. He has ceased to think, yet his radiant thoughts live in us. His shy smile and gleaming eyes beckon us, soldiers of Tambo, to ever fight with more vigour and ferocity.

As Brecht once said, there are those we cannot do without (in a revolution). Xhego is one of those we cannot do without.

As we beat the enemy to constant retreat, as the enemy deafeningly groans under our pounding blows, the absence of the like of Nkululo Njongwe is felt even more. He was a fighter, a poet and a teacher. He lived up to his standards.

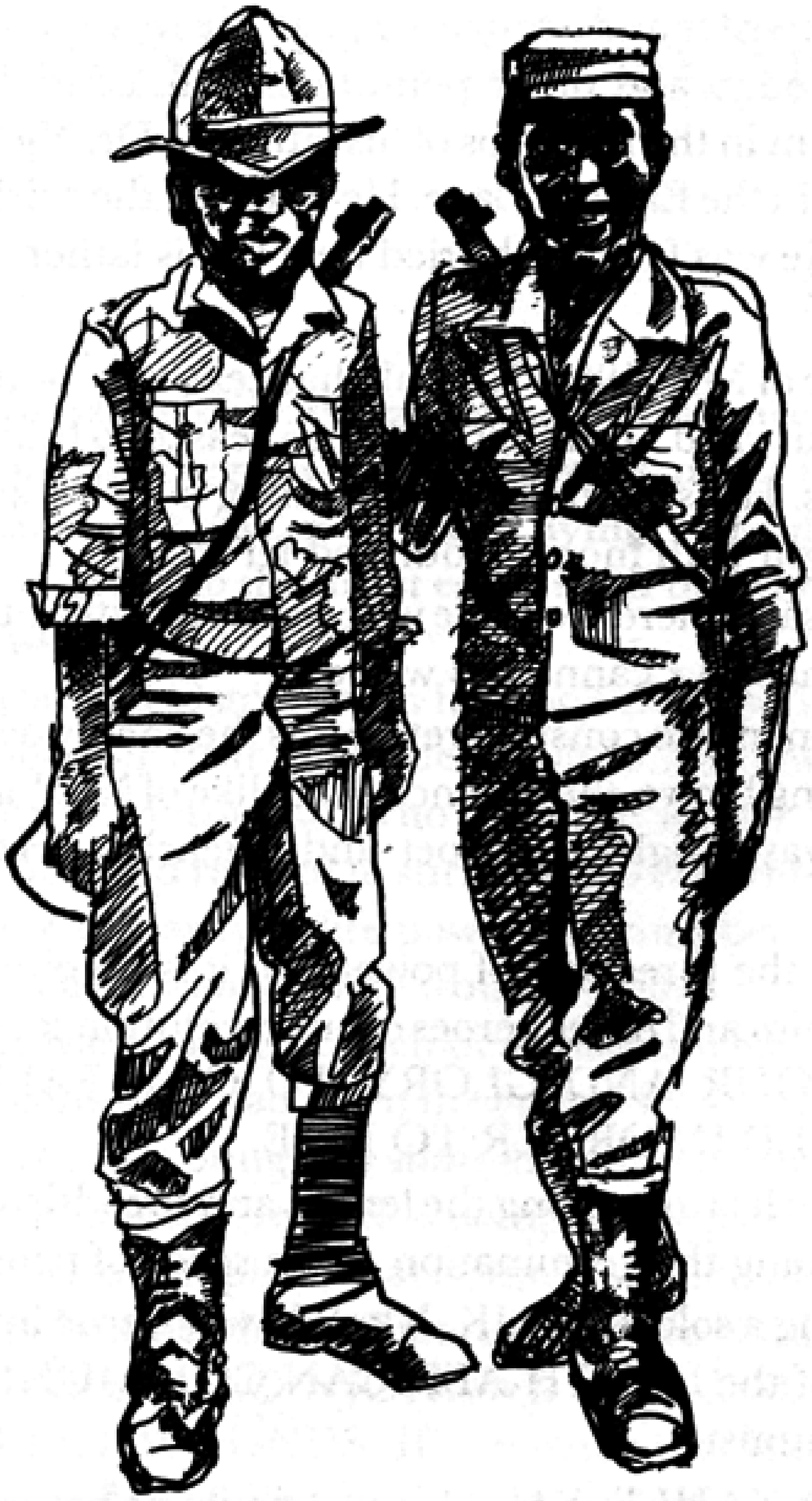
We are now on the threshold of power and it is precisely because of the heroic exploits of him and other heroes of our revolution that we are where we are today. HONOUR AND GLORY TO OUR FALLEN HEROES, THEY HAVE DIED IN ORDER TO LIVE.

Their blood which is drenching the length and breadth of our country has helped and is helping the germination of the seeds of people's power.

Apart from being a soldier of MK, Nkululo was a true internationalist, an ardent member of the SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY! He died a true communist!

To say HAMBA KAHLE, XHEGO, we can do no better than quote from his article in *Dawn* entitled: "Open wounds of Memory" —

> "Let us accompany you to the peace valley of the fallen. Allow us to intrude upon your world of silent summers with a message from the living. Take us, for we believe there are messages you left unsaid. Accept us in your midst for we believe we have done you no wrong. Give us messages to carry to those still making the world and in turn pass our word to those that went before. Perhaps there is still something we still do not understand, a piece of knowledge that could make things all the easier, a comforting handshake that shall make less pain of your sudden departure . . . What becomes of us without you? . . . Make us believe that even in your absence the journey is still ours."



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MORE ON NEW 'MARXIST' TENDENCIES AND THE BATTLE OF IDEAS

From a Reader, Maputo

Dear Editor,
Permit me to make a few comments on Nyawuza's article, "New 'Marxist' Tendencies and the Battle of Ideas in South Africa" (*AC No. 103, Fourth Quarter, 1985*).

Comrade Nyawuza offers an analysis of the ideas of the self-styled "Marxist tendency within the ANC" expelled by the 1985 ANC Consultative Conference, as well as those of the National Forum. He locates the origin of both positions in "new Marxist" ideas which emerged in mainly white student and intellectual circles in the 1970s. Cut off from the practices and traditions of non-racial democratic opposition to apartheid by the banning of the CP and ANC, and excluded from the black consciousness movement, a number of white intellectuals retreated into the libraries. They became influenced by trendy "new Marxist" ideas in vogue in western Europe, developed a panache for "abstract intellectualism" and a "distaste for the hard slogging day-to-day explanation and mobilisation of the people on bread and butter issues". It is out of this milieu that the group expelled at the June conference allegedly emerged.

The implication of Comrade Nyawuza's argument is clear: the politics both of the "Inqaba group" and of the National Forum represent the logical translation into practice of the so-called "new Marxist ideas" which emerged in the 1970s. Since there is no possibility of a "unity of ideas" either with the expelled group or, implicitly, with the "new Marxism" which spawned them, there should be a "demarcation of differences" in the sharpening "battle of ideas".

While it may be true that some of those involved in the attempt to use Marxist theory to reconceptualise and analyse South African society retreated to the libraries as frustrated activists, the emergence in the 1970s of a "new school" of Marxist-orientated analysis was much more than this. Fundamentally, it was a reflection of a profound crisis of bourgeois ideology in its liberal form — an element of the multiple crisis of apartheid society produced by the advancing mass struggle. Similarly, although some writers were undoubtedly influenced by "trendy" theories in vogue in western Europe, what was essentially "new" about the "new Marxism" was that it represented a sustained attempt to use Marxism as a tool of analysis of South African society rather than the categories of bourgeois social science. Comrade Nyawuza surely cannot be indifferent to the fact that a body of literature now exists which attempts to examine, from a Marxist perspective, the basic mechanisms of exploitation and oppression in our country as well as seeking to identify the underlying class struggles. One need not agree with all the positions put forward to recognise that the placing of such questions on the agenda of academic social science and historical research represents a small but significant advance over the situation which prevailed when the field was totally dominated by bourgeois ideology.

As for those who have produced this work, it is to be expected that such social categories as "white students and intellectuals" would be characterised by a degree of vacillation and polarisation in different directions not allowed for in Nyawuza's suggestion that all are somehow closet "Inqaba" supporters. Although he concedes that "we are not dealing with a clearly worked-out 'school of thought' or ideology", Nyawuza tends to assume a predisposition towards positions hostile to or critical of those of our movement. In reality, the category of "white intellectuals" who either have been or are involved in producing "new" (in the sense defined above) Marxist analyses embraces individuals with widely differing political affiliations, and indeed a number with no political affiliation. While a few may be in the "Inqaba group" and some sympathisers, if not members, of the National Forum, others are to be found in the ranks of our own movement! Moreover, Nyawuza is incorrect to assume that the politics of Petersen, Legassick et al. emerged as a logical outgrowth of the "academic Marxism" of the 1970s. In reality, the politics of the "tendency" could be described as a marriage of a certain form of workerism which developed in the trade union movement at home (where Petersen was active before coming to Britain) with the Trotskyism of the Militant tendency in Britain. It is also absurd to suggest that the National Forum, with its origins in Black Consciousness, grew out of the white "new Marxist" academic left.

Good and Bad

What is needed in our movement is a more serious appraisal of the "new Marxist" literature. We need to be sensitive to its potential contribution to our struggle, as well as to its errors and shortcomings.

For example, it is undoubtedly the case that there is a strong impulse towards workerism both among "white intellectuals" and in certain circles in the trade union movement. This should be criticised. But we need to be accurate about who and what we are criticising. The term workerism, as I understand its use in Marxist theory, implies a view which privileges the economic struggles of workers under capitalism. It assumes that the forms of organisation through which the working class conducts these struggles i.e. trade unions, are a sufficient basis for it to engage in the political struggle for state power. It also tends to assume that the working class can "go it alone" and has no need to enter into alliance with other oppressed class forces. This too is, I think, the thrust of the position of Sisa Njikelana as represented in the quotation on p.57.

Nyawuza himself, however, goes much further. He writes:

> "For the 'workerists' capitalist society is characterised by a basic contradiction between capital and labour based on the fact that the wealth produced by the class of non-owners of the means of production is appropriated by the class of owners . . . 'Workerists' see this contradiction as the primary one in a capitalist society . . .".

Nyawuza fails to make any distinction between the dominant contradiction of any particular conjuncture, and the determinant contradiction of a society based on the capitalist exploitation. He wants to argue, quite correctly, that the dominant contradiction in South Africa at this stage of our struggle is between the nationally oppressed of all classes and the oppressors. However, he does so in a way which throws out the baby with the bath water, by denying the determinacy of the contradiction between capital and labour. I would venture to suggest that on Nyawuza's definition, Marx, Lenin and indeed the South African Communist Party could all be defined as "workerist". The 1962 programme of the Party reads:

> "This deep contradiction between social production and private appropriation leads to great conflicts in society between the masses of the people and the monopoly capitalists who control their destiny . . . These conflicts cannot be resolved within the framework of the capitalist system . . . Social progress has always come about

> through class struggles; struggles between slaves and their owners, between feudal lords and their serfs, and today between the two main classes of society, the capitalists and the working class". (*South African Communists Speak* pp.287/8.)

What Nyawuza's formulations reflect is an unfortunate tendency to use the term "workerist" as a convenient, but inaccurate, label to be applied indiscriminately to those on the left whose positions one disagrees with. It represents the mirror image of the same inaccurate and indiscriminate application of the term "populist" to the politics of our movement. Our movement is not populist precisely because it sees itself as an alliance of oppressed class forces and not as a "classless alliance". Similarly, it is not "workerist" to raise the legitimate question of how working class leadership can be asserted at all levels of our liberation struggle. This is a real issue that needs to be taken up in serious debate.

Technology and Expertise

While Comrade Nyawuza does not take up this question directly, some of his passing remarks are revealing. On p.58 he writes: "The problem with people advocating 'socialism now' is that they expect those Blacks who cannot read and write to run socialist industries and mines. Although I would hazard a guess that the average level of literacy in Russia on the eve of the October Socialist Revolution was no higher than that in South Africa today, the comrade is correct in suggesting that it is unrealistic to expect technically unqualified workers in a specific plant to immediately perform themselves all the complex administrative and technical tasks currently performed by bourgeois management.

However, what bothers me is the implicit suggestion that because workers may be technically unqualified to take over all such tasks, they are also incapable of "running" either individual enterprises or indeed the economy as a whole in a political sense. Writers on problems of socialist transition from Lenin onwards have identified the resolution of the contradiction arising out of the gap between the working class' political control and its need to rely on other class forces to provide technical inputs as one of the key problems of a process of socialist transition. Is Comrade Nyawuza suggesting that the South African working class' lack of technical skills renders it incapable of acting politically on its own behalf?

If the working class of our country is unqualified in the political sense to run socialist industries, how can we expect it to assume the leading role in our liberation struggle? Or is Comrade Nyawuza suggesting that this role has to be assumed by some other force acting on its behalf? If so, what force? And how does this square with earlier strictures about " 'Marxists' [who] talk 'on behalf' of the black working class; but [whose] relationship to the black workers is suspect" (p49)?

ORGANISATION IS A WEAPON FOR VICTORY

From Len Khumalo

Dear Editor,
The Year of the Cadre was declared to meet the very challenges of seizure of power. It is for this reason that we, all of us as cadres with differing responsibilities must grasp with all our might the fact that from now until victory we are expected to tap all our energies in contributing to the seizure of power unselfishly and unsparingly.

The content of our work must therefore reflect the character of our organisation. From training up to performance of assigned tasks we must strictly be guided by the political line of our organisation. The training and assignment of tasks must itself be in conformity with this line. Pitfalls in this are tantamount to failure at the national level to reconcile theory and practice.

In accordance with the Freedom Charter the aim of education and training should be "to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace." It is during education and training that cadres must be imbued with the highest standards of morality (i.e. complete dedication to the cause of liberation) and discipline. Let us repeat the old but undiluted Marxist maxim that political and class consciousness does not come of its own but must be brought from outside.

Training is another important aspect of cadre policy, training must be done prior to specification of tasks. A situation whereby after training some makeshift tasks are improvised to fit the new graduates to avoid them idling is an anomaly that must never be allowed. Production of cadres whose tasks are not predefined leads as the crow flies to redundancy, lethargy and ossification. It creates a very absurd picture whereby there is a shortage of personnel, especially operatives inside the country, while on the other hand cadres are complaining of being dumped and forgotten.

Cadres are expected to be flexible and take initiatives in their tasks but this does not justify an ambiguous allocation of tasks. An organisation must as far as possible deploy cadres in accordance with their capabilities, interest and personalities. Needless to say that these qualities can only be best assessed after an individual has been subjected to an unwavering ideological influence. Failure to deploy cadres in this way will stifle their potential and inevitably weaken our organisation.

In the same line with training and deployment is promotion (and/or demotion). Promotion of cadres should not be casual or accidental. It must be consciously directed in accordance with the objective needs of an organisation. The criterion of promotion must also be strictly based on an individual's performance.

Leading cadres who are inefficient, politically bankrupt and insensitive to new developments should without fail or delay be demoted. Demotion must be done in a very principled manner without personal attitudes lest it cause dissatisfaction. Demotion should not be and is not synonymous with a reshuffle. The latter is for the purpose of placing cadres in positions where they will perform better than where they were placed before. The former means removing cadres from senior positions to lower ones due to their failures. To be principled in this therefore means that demoted cadres (or those deserving demotion) must not be placed in positions that are equal to their previous ones.

The ANC's strength in terms of membership and cell organisation inside the country is still weak. This weakness is also due to the fact that it is a complicated task to organise tens of millions of people into a living, moving revolutionary system. But we must make a distinction between professional revolutionaries and revolutionary masses in general. The former denotes all those members of the revolutionary organisation who are engaged full time in revolutionary activity. If engaged in any other, this should be only for the purpose of covering the main employment. Most important however it denotes those whose political and class consciousness is at such a high level so as to make it impossible for any other interests to be primary to the interests of the revolution. The general revolutionary masses are all those discontented people who so much hate the oppressive racist regime and now and then confront it in battles but are not members of the revolutionaries as such. The latter must however be able to involve them in their millions.

To achieve this the detailed but essential work of the revolution must be decentralized from the core of professional revolutionaries and be split along its seams into hundreds of tasks. These tasks are then given to hundreds of detail workers. This is not only help in drawing more and more people into revolutionary activity and close to the organisation but it also ensures that the comparatively few professional revolutionaries are not bogged down by details at the expense of more complex tasks facing them. Such a tactic also reduces the danger and posssibility of colossal and dramatic scoops and trials. One particular specialized work carried out by one factory worker in his factory (and there will be millions of such workers) will, as Lenin said "Make it more difficult for police to 'net' those 'detail workers', and the more difficult will it be for them to frame up out of an arrest for some petty affair, a case that would justify the government's spending on 'security'. At the same time those masses of 'detail workers' must, as they go through their own political experience, be convinced of the importance of such seemingly negligible contributions, must be imbued with confidence in themselves and in their organisation. Further, in the attitude of the organisation towards their work and towards themselves, they must see for themselves how impossible the revolution is without them. Only a highly organised vanguard with a kernel of unbreakable and undivided leadership backed up by an unflinching support of loyal, class conscious and disciplined cadres can be able to imbue all this in the masses it leads.

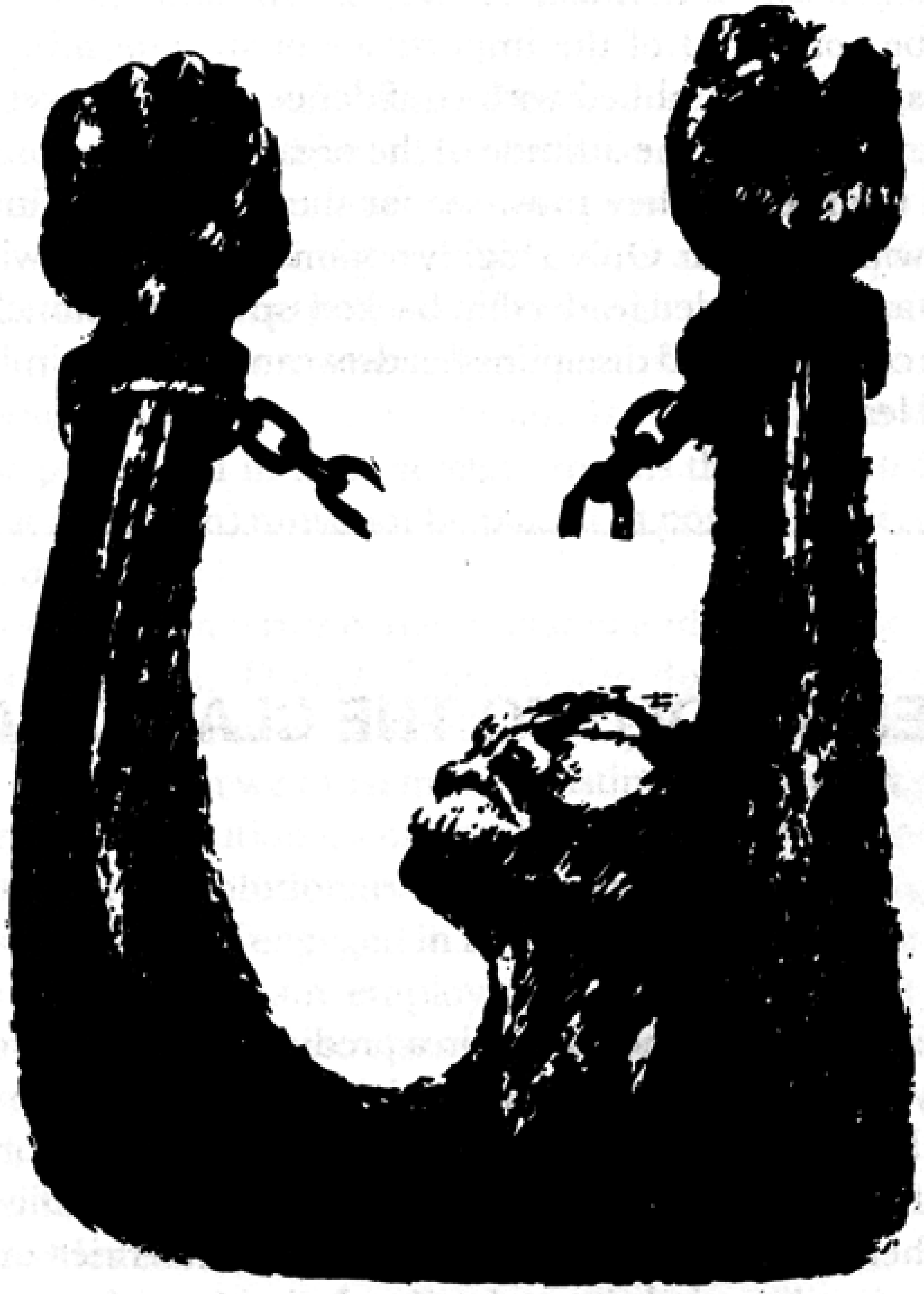
THEY RESPONDED TO THE CLARION CALL

From Peiges

Dear Editor,
Botha and his retinue find themselves in a predicament the source of which is an ongoing typhoon of unrest entangling the country as a whole. The current mass actions by the oppressed majority of our country is a response to the call made by the President of our vanguard movement comrade Oliver Tambo in his speech when he called the people to render South Africa ungovernable.

The international community recognises the justness of our cause and this explains their broad participation in anti-apartheid and disinvestment campaigns. But the Reagan and Thatcher governments are hostile to the campaign for economic sanctions against S.A. This should not come as a surprise since they are the main political fuel filling stations of the apartheid machinery.

Pretoria and its allies should be made aware that the current unrests can only be terminated if and only if Botha and his gang of murderers are prepared to listen to the fundamental demands of the oppressed as enshrined in the Freedom Charter.



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